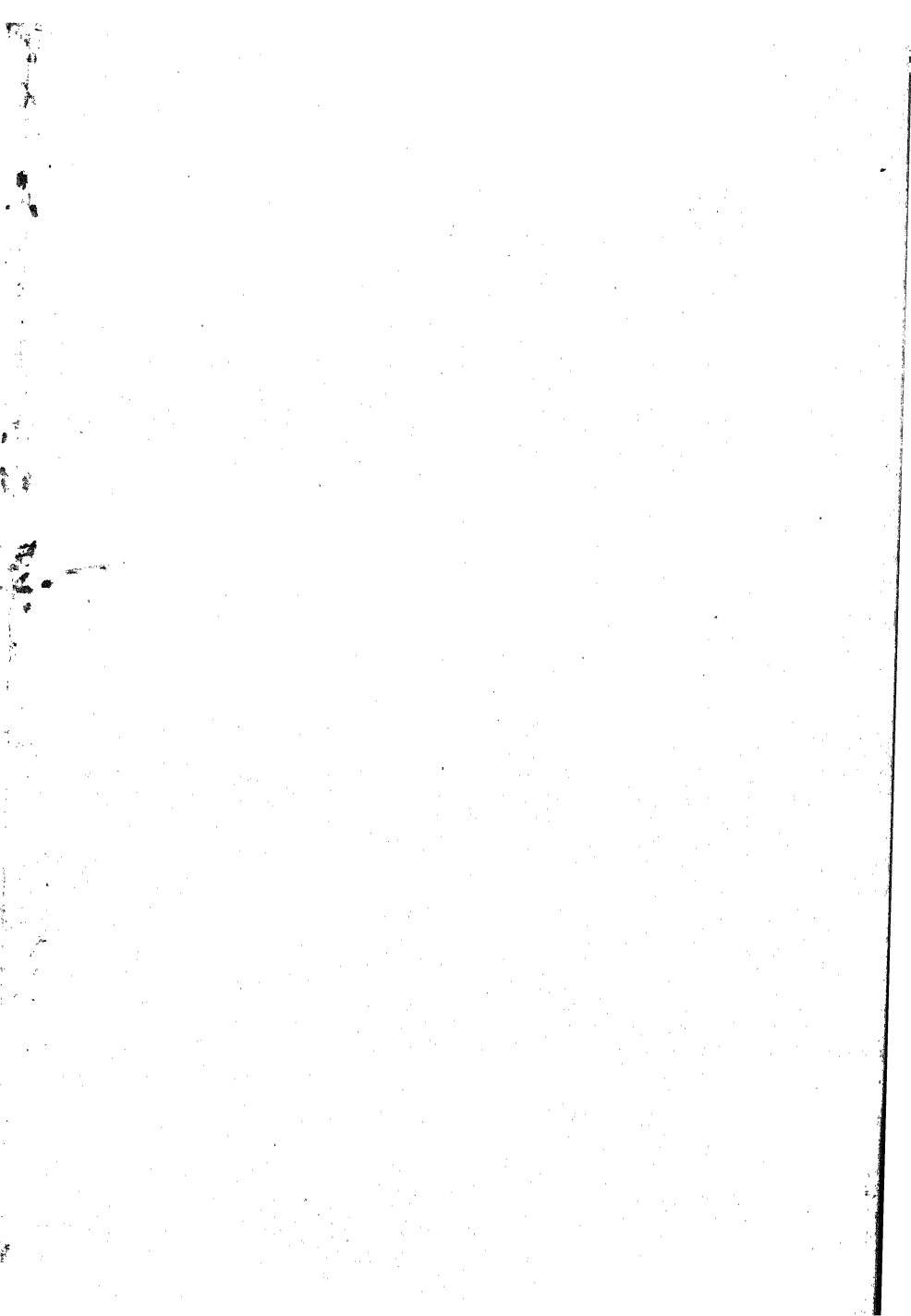


HISTORY OF EUROPE

"BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scripturum ; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit : et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas, primo Punico conserebant bello : odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt quam viribus : et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt."—LIVY, lib. xxi.

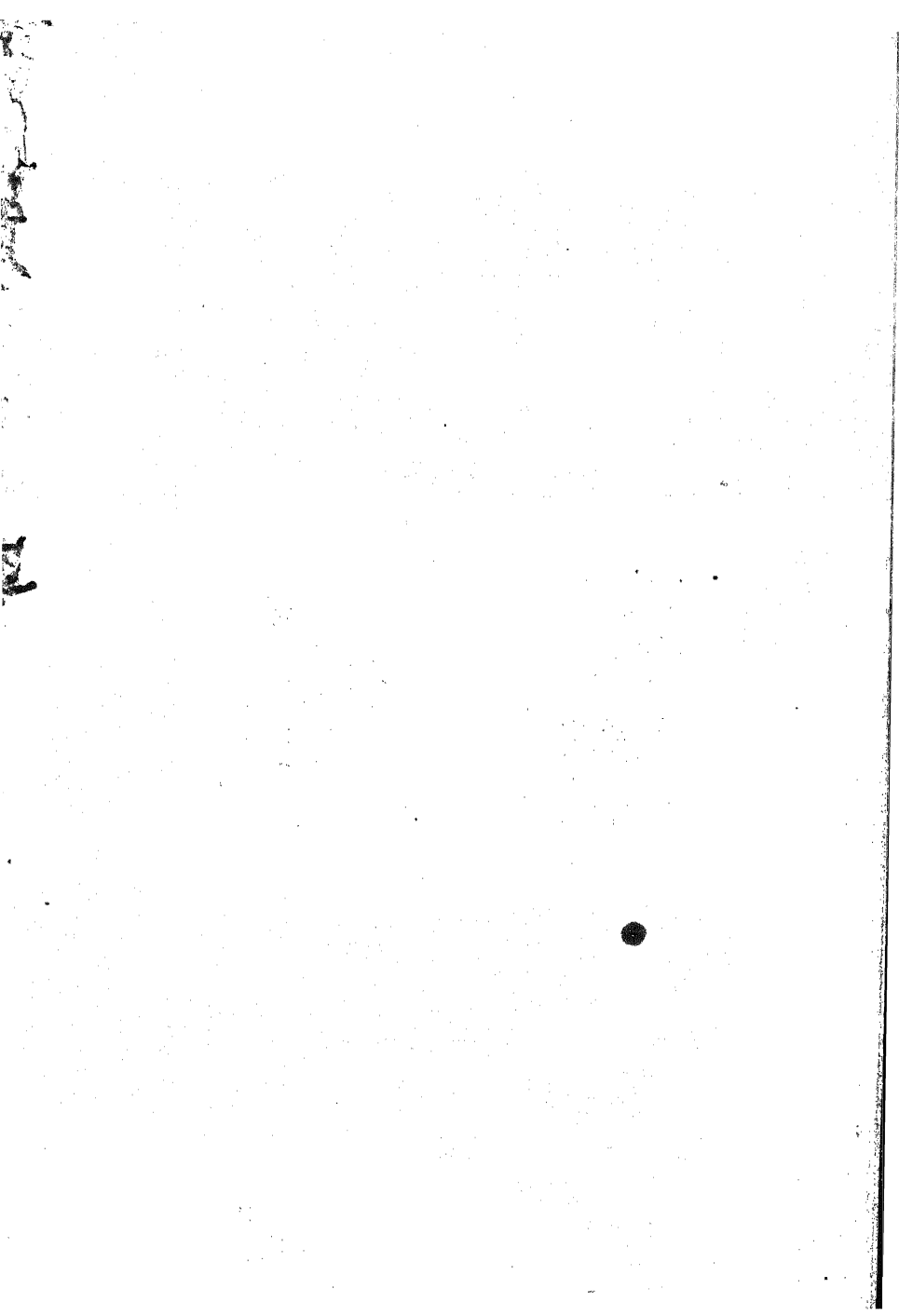




From a Bust in the possession of the Author

T. W. H. H. H.

THE AUTHOR'S



HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM

THE COMMENCEMENT OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

TO THE

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN MDCCCXV

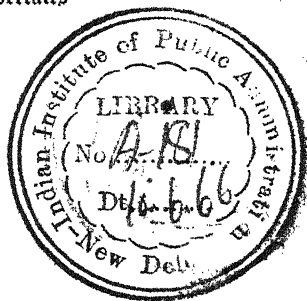
BY

ARCHIBALD ALISON, L.L.D.

F.R.S.E.

New Edition, with Portraits

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER LXV.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CORTES—WAR IN THE EAST OF SPAIN.
JANUARY 1810—FEBRUARY 1812.

So intimately blended together are the links in the great chain of human affairs, and so mysterious the bond which unites in this sublunary state the co-existing principles of good and evil, that it is impossible to find any period when these antagonist powers have not been at work, and when unseen causes have not been preparing a vital change in the fate of nations or the fortunes of mankind. In the darkest moments of the French Revolution, the seeds of revived religion and renewed loyalty were widely scattered throughout the nations. In the most depressing period of the conquests of Napoleon, the principles of resistance were acquiring increased energy, and suffering was preparing in silence the renovation of the world. The period we are now considering was no exception to the general law. At the moment when the constancy of England and the heroism of Russia were preparing the emancipation of the Continent from French oppression, and the delusions of democracy were disappearing in northern Europe before the experience of its effects, or about to yield to the aroused indignation of mankind, a new principle of evil was springing up in the

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I.

Singular
mixture of
good and
evil in hu-
man affairs.

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last asylum of Continental independence, destined to revive in another quarter the worn-out flames, and perpetuate a frightful civil war for a quarter of a century in the Spanish peninsula. And while Great Britain was securely laying the foundations of a colonial empire which was to embrace the earth in its grasp and civilise mankind by its wisdom, the vast Indian possessions of the Spanish monarchy were breaking off from the parent state, and the frantic passions of ill-regulated freedom were preparing desolation and ruin for the realms of South America.

2.

Agency by
which this
is brought
about.

That there is no rose without its thorn, and no thorn without its rose, is a maxim in private life which the concurring voice of all ages has proclaimed, and every man's experience who has seen much of human affairs must probably have confirmed. The law of nature seems to be of universal application and unceasing activity; for we can distinctly trace its agency in every transaction, whether individual or political, in the page of history or in common life around us, and perpetually witness its effects alike in the trials of individuals and the discipline of nations.* In the very events which at one period are most the objects of our desire, whether as communities or private men, we can subsequently trace the unobserved causes of our distresses; in the evils which we at the time regarded as altogether overwhelming, we afterwards discern with thankfulness the secret springs of our blessings or improvement. Inexperience or infidelity will discover in this mysterious system only the blind operation of

* ——"Know I am sent

To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
Expect to hear; supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow; equally inured
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse."

Paradise Lost, xi. 355.

chance, or the antagonist agency of equal and opposing supreme powers: reason equally with revelation tells us, that such is necessarily the condition of a world composed of free agents in a state of moral probation. If the good principles alone were brought into action, it would be heaven—if the bad, hell. The mixed condition of mankind, and the perpetual agency of the causes of evil amidst good, and of good amidst evil, unavoidably arise from that inherent tendency to wickedness as well as those aids to virtue, which we have inherited from our First Parents, or derived through Revelation. The pride of intellect, the visions of philanthropy, will to the end of time chafe against this simple truth, and contend, on the principle of unlimited perfectibility, for a relaxation of every restraint, except what itself imposes, on human action. But it is the only principle which will ever afford any solution of the otherwise inexplicable maze of human affairs. Experience, the great test of truth, is perpetually demonstrating its universal application. Suffering, widespread and inevitable, never fails to chastise any attempt to elude its obligations; and the more widely one generation deviates from it in their actions, the more closely will the next adhere to it in their opinions.

Never was the truth of these principles more clearly evinced, than in the contrast between the immediate and ultimate results which followed the arrival of the French before Cadiz in 1810. Europe beheld with admiration the able and energetic march of the Duke of Albuquerque, which, outstripping the celerity of the French legions, preserved the last bulwark of Spanish independence for the arms of freedom.¹ The subsequent assembly of the Cortes within its impregnable ramparts, promised to give that unity to the Spanish operations of which the want had hitherto so grievously been experienced in them, at the same time that it presented a national authority with which other powers might treat, in their negotiations for the furtherance of the common cause; while

3.
Ultimate
effects of
the blockade
of Cadiz.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiii. § 46.

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the English people, variously affected by philanthropic ardour or mercantile interest, beheld with undisguised satisfaction the progressive emancipation of the South American colonies, and fondly anticipated, some a renovation of the southern hemisphere, others a boundless extension of the field for British speculation, in the regenerated states of the New World. Yet from these very events, so fortunate at the moment in their immediate effects, so apparently auspicious in their remote consequences, have arisen results to the last degree pernicious, both to the Spanish peninsula and the British empire.

4.
Vast effects
it has pro-
duced in the
world.

The establishment of the Cortes within the walls of Cadiz brought it under the direct influence of the democratic mob of a great and corrupted city; the revolutionary passions revived with the immediate subjection of supreme power to their control; and the constitution of 1812 bequeathed to the Spanish peninsula the fatal gift of a system of government, alike impracticable for the country at large, and seducing to the urban constituencies for whose interest it was intended. The severance of the Spanish colonies from the parent state, to which the mercantile jealousy of the Cadiz government speedily gave rise, spread the revolutionary passions through a people unfit, alike from their habits, intelligence, and descent, for the blessings of freedom: the bright dawn of their independence was speedily overcast with clouds; and the now wasted and distracted South American states, the successive prey of a race of tyrants too numerous for history to record, and of a succession of revolutions too frequent for mankind to recollect, remain an enduring monument of the utter impracticability of applying to a Roman Catholic population and Celtic tribes those institutions, which are overspreading the world with the Protestant faith and the Anglo-Saxon race.

Nor has England suffered less in this audacious attempt

to war against the character of men and the laws of nature. Consequences, to the last degree disastrous, have accrued both to her people and her constitution from the independence of the Spanish colonies, in promoting which she took so prominent a share. Her wealth, guided by deluded, or the prey of unprincipled hands, has been absorbed to an unparalleled extent in South American speculations. The loss of fifty millions, lent to their faithless insolvent republics, or reckless and improvident companies, with the vast drain of specie to which their demands gave rise, brought on the great commercial crisis of 1825. The entire abandonment of the South American mines, from the bankruptcy of those who worked them, and the general destruction of population and industry in the country, which, as a necessary consequence, followed, altered by a half the annual supply of the precious metals to form money over the globe; and, joined to the suppression of small notes in Great Britain by the bill of 1826, added a third to the whole debt, public and private, of the British empire. From the general distress and suffering thence arising, sprang that widespread discontent and general unanimity in favour of some organic change, which in its ultimate effects overturned the English constitution. Out of the walls of Cadiz, in 1810 and 1811, has issued the cloud which now over-spreads the world—the fierce passions which have since drenched the Peninsula with blood—the guilty ambition which has halved the numbers of the South American population, and almost reduced them to barbarism—the restless energy which overthrew the constitutional freedom of the Restoration in France—the turbulent spirit which overturned the tempered aristocracy and government of property in England.

Little dreaming of the momentous consequences dependent on their actions, the Spanish authorities in the Isle of Leon, animated with unconquerable resolution, and a spirit of resistance which seemed to augment with

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5.

Evils accru-
ing to Eng-
land from
the demo-
cracy of
Cadiz.

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1810.

6.

Regulations
laid down
for the con-
vocation of
the Cortes.
Jan. 29,
1810.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiii. § 46.

the straits to which they were reduced, proceeded to the formation of a Cortes for the regulation of the constitution. It has been already mentioned that the central junta, after their expulsion from Seville in January 1810, had passed a decree, vesting the interim government in a regency of six persons, which was proclaimed in Cadiz on the 31st, and laying down the principles by which the convocation of the Cortes was to be regulated.¹ These were of the utmost importance, and materially influenced the character of the subsequent proceedings. By the first, the ancient constitution of that body was altered, and, instead of assembling as of old in three chambers, they were to meet in two; the one called the Popular, the other the Dignified Assembly. A still more important enactment was passed, relative to the mode of supplying the members of such provinces of the monarchy as, from their distance from the place of assembly, or from being in the possession of the enemy, could not meet for the purpose of choosing representatives. It was provided, with a view to the choice of deputies to represent those provinces of America or Asia which could not, by reason of their distance, be summoned in time, that the regency should appoint an electoral junta, composed of six persons, natives of those regions, who should choose, by a double ballot, twenty-six deputies out of a list of persons, also natives of the same districts, who happened to be at that time in Spain, that list being made up by a committee of the Cortes. In like manner, to fill up the representation of the provinces in the occupation of the enemy, another electoral junta was appointed by the regency, composed of six other individuals, natives of those districts, who were to choose, by a double ballot, four members for each of such provinces out of a list furnished by the Cortes. The provinces, in regard to which representatives were to be chosen in this manner, comprised the whole of Spain, with the exception of Galicia, Asturias,² and part of

² Proclamation of Junta, Jan. 29, 1810. *Tor.* iii. 464. *Pièces Just.*

Catalonia; so that the great majority of the Cortes was necessarily composed of persons elected in the city of Cadiz. The powers of the assembly thus elected were sufficiently extensive, for they embraced a general remodelling of the whole laws and constitution of the monarchy.

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1810.

With regard to the legislative business of the assembly, it was provided that all propositions for changes in the laws should be submitted, in the first instance, to the two chambers, and, if passed by them, be sent up to the regency, in place of the crown, for approval; but the regency might in the first instance refuse their consent, and remit the bill to the chambers for reconsideration. If, however, it was then approved by two-thirds of both houses, it was to return to the regency, who were bound to adhibit their signature to it within the space of three days, on the expiry of which it became law, with *or without* the royal sanction.¹

7.
Enactments
regarding
the passing
of laws by
the Cortes.

¹ Ibid. Tor.
iii. 464.
Pièces Just.

Strongly as these fundamental provisions savoured of popular restrictions on the royal authority, their effect became doubly powerful from the circumstances of the city, and character of the population, in which the sittings of the Cortes took place. The junta, immediately before the resignation of their authority, passed two resolutions, by the first of which the liberty of the press was established in the most ample manner during the whole sitting of the Cortes, and in the place of its deliberations; while, by the second, none of their own members were declared eligible for the approaching national convention. After their resignation, and before the assembly of the Cortes, the regency of six, to whom the supreme authority had been confided, insensibly sank into insignificance; and the municipal junta of Cadiz, elected by the whole householders of the city, rapidly rose to the highest influence and consideration. It may easily be conceived what was the character of a municipality elected in a great commercial city, by universal household suffrage,

8.
Character
of the popu-
lation in
Cadiz, and
the munici-
pality with-
in its walls.

Jan. 29.

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during a time of mingled terror, enthusiasm, and patriotic fervour. Its population of a hundred and fifty thousand souls, increased at that period by nearly a hundred thousand strangers, who had taken refuge within its impregnable walls from all parts of the Peninsula,—naturally democratic in its tendency, was then in the most violent state of effervescence; the central junta, under whose government so many disasters had been experienced, had fallen into universal obloquy; and the ardent, inexperienced multitude, who had lost or suffered so much in the course of the contest, not unnaturally concluded that all these disorders were to be ascribed to the ignorance or incapacity of former rulers, and that the only chance of salvation for the country was to be found in the substitution of the vigour of popular for the imbecility of aristocratic direction.¹

¹ Hard. xi.
145, 146.
South. iv.
284, 286.
Tor. iii.
184, 187.

9.
Extremely
democratic
spirit which
prevailed in
that city.

The great majority of the municipal junta, accordingly, were, from the very first, strongly tinctured with republican sentiments. Their incessant object was to augment their own power, and depress that of every other authority in the state; and nothing but the presence of the large military force of the allied nations within the fortress, amounting to twenty-seven thousand men, prevented them from breaking out into all the excesses of the French Revolution. Though restrained in this way from such atrocities, however, the revolutionary action soon became so violent as to gain the entire civil direction of the clubs, in which democratic sentiments of the most violent kind, uttered amidst thunders of applause, were heard in all quarters of the city. The public press shared in the general excitement. The most licentious and profligate works of the French metropolis were translated, sold at a low price, and greedily devoured by the populace. One of the most popular journals indicated the state of public feeling by taking the title of the "Spanish Robespierre;"² and when the few members of the junta, who really had been elected by the pro-

² Hard. xi.
169, 172.
Tor. iii.
186, 187.
Southey, iv.
285, 286.

vinces, arrived at Cadiz in the beginning of March, the torrent had become irresistible, and they found themselves instantly swept away by the flood of democratic fury.

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The principal members of the late central junta which had governed Spain, if not with credit or success, at least with constancy and courage, during fourteen months of almost continued disaster, were speedily exposed to persecution and violence from this infuriated party. Count Tilly and Don Lorenzo Calvo were arrested and thrown into prison on a charge of treason to the Spanish cause, on grounds so clearly futile and unfounded; that public opinion, excited as it was, could not support the measure. All the other members of the junta were proceeded against in the same vague manner, and searched or imprisoned without any vestige of ground, except the one which they shared with all Spain, that of having been unfortunate. The clamour of the multitude, prevailing alike over the dictates of justice and the principles of reason, insisted on their immediate prosecution with the utmost rigour of the law. Even the venerable name and great services of Jovellanos could not protect his person from contumely, or avert an iniquitous decree which banished him without trial to his own province, there to be placed under the surveillance of the police. Such was the grief which he felt at this undeserved severity, that it embittered his few remaining days, and brought him speedily to the grave. Tilly died in prison without a trial. Calvo, one of the heroes of Saragossa, who had been thrust into a dungeon without a bed in it, was brought to trial after the Cortes met, and acquitted. So violent, however, was the public effervescence, that the British ambassador felt relieved by the imprisonment of these unfortunate functionaries, lest the populace should anticipate the march of legal proceedings, and take the wreaking of vengeance into their own hands.¹

10.
Persecution
of the mem-
bers of the
central
junta.
Feb. 1810.

¹ Tor. iii.
190, 192.
South. iv.
296, and
298.

Having got possession of the government of the country,

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11.

Circum-
stances
which pre-
ceded and
attended the
assembling
of the
Cortes.

June 13.

¹ Tor. iii.
342, 347.
South. v.
75. Hard.
xi. 168, 170.

the regency and municipality of Cadiz were in no hurry to accelerate the assembling of the Cortes, by which a rival and paramount legislative power might be established in the very seat of their authority. By the decree of the 29th January, that assembly stood convoked for the 1st March, "if the national defence would permit;" but these words were sufficiently vague to allow the continued blockade of Cadiz to be accepted as a reason against convoking the Cortes, and furnished a decent pretext to the regency for delaying their meeting. The promised time, accordingly, passed over without anything being done. Loud clamours in consequence arose, both among the inhabitants of Cadiz and from various deputies from the juntas of different provinces, who had taken refuge within its walls; and the ferment at length became so violent, that the government deemed it necessary to yield to the torrent, and issued a decree for the convocation of the Cortes. Great difficulties, however, were experienced in determining the principles on which the members were to be summoned, and still more in filling up the returns of deputies from the districts occupied by the enemy. Another question of still more importance was, whether the Cortes should sit in *one*, or in two chambers, as the decree of the late junta had provided. At length, after a vehement discussion, it was determined that the ancient mode of election should be completely changed, and that the assembly should sit in a SINGLE CHAMBER. From that moment the ruin of the cause of freedom in Spain was irrevocable.¹

12.
The election
is based on
numbers,
not inte-
rests.

The mode of election formerly had been various in different provinces, but, in all, the principle of the representation of, and election by, the three *orders* had been more or less clearly established: a principle, indeed, which was universal in the middle ages in all the European communities, and may be considered as the distinctive mark of European civilisation. It was followed and given effect to by the division of the Cortes into the three

chambers, or *estamentos*, of the nobles, the clergy, and the commons, each of which had a negative on any legislative measure. The members for the boroughs were in general chosen by their magistrates, not their inhabitants; but there was no fixed rule, and ancient custom regulated the franchise and its mode or exercise. It was now determined, however, by the regency, in opposition to the strenuous advice of the illustrious Jovellanos, that the principle of the elections should not be, as of old, the representation of ranks or of *orders*, but of *individuals*; and as a consequence of this, that the elective franchise should be given to every Spaniard domiciled in the country, of the age of twenty-five years. One deputy was to be returned for every fifty thousand souls in the rural districts; one by every borough which formerly returned a member; and one by every provincial junta, in consideration of their services during the war. The whole of the deputies, thus elected by universal suffrage, were to sit in one chamber: the nobles and the church had no separate representation. In this assembly, therefore, the Dukes of Medina Cœli or del Infantado, or the Archbishop of Toledo, had no more influence than a simple mechanic. How long would the institutions of England, with its calm judgments, old habits, and Anglo-Saxon descent, withstand the dissolving influence of a *single* constituent assembly vested with unbounded legislative power, elected and conducting business in such a manner? Not one week. What, then, was to be expected from the fervent spirit and inexperienced ambition of Andalusia, suddenly invested with supreme uncontrolled power, under the burning sun, and within the beleaguered walls of Cadiz? ¹

¹ Tor. iii.
342, 351.
South. v.
75, 85.
Hard. ix.
169, 170.

Perilous as were the elements of legislation thus thrown together in the national assembly of Spain, the danger was materially augmented by the steps taken to fill up the supplementary members for the provinces beyond seas, and those in the occupation of the enemy. By an

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13.

Election of
the supple-
mentary
members
of Cortes.
Sept. 8.

edict published in the beginning of September, it was provided that the number chosen for the provinces beyond seas should be twenty-eight, and for the conquered provinces forty; and that both the electors and the elected should be taken *from the persons belonging to those districts who had then taken refuge in Cadiz*. Thus one part of the Cortes was composed of deputies chosen by universal suffrage in the cities and provinces of Spain yet unoccupied by the enemy; and the remainder made up of refugees, selected by the same mode of choice from the promiscuous crowd who encumbered the streets of that great commercial emporium. No restrictions of any sort were imposed on the choice of any of the members; it was only necessary that the deputy should be above twenty-five, born in the province for which he was chosen, and unconvicted of any crime. It is remarkable that a proceeding so perfectly novel and revolutionary as this formation of the Cortes, to which the entire remodelling of the Spanish constitution was intrusted, not only met with no opposition at Cadiz, but was cordially supported by men of all parties, even the most exalted functionaries, and the staunchest supporters of the ancient order of things: another proof among the many which history affords, that revolutions are diseases of the national mind, which, however they may be strengthened by the discontent or suffering of the lower orders, really originate in the infatuation of the higher; and that the class who invariably put the fatal weapon into the hand of the masses, are those who are ultimately to be swept away by their fury.¹

¹ Martignac
sur l'Es-
pagne, 94,
95. Tor. iii.
349, 356.
South. v. 78,
85. Hard. xi.
170, 172.

14.
Election of
the Cortes
itself.

The deluded patriots who had thus conceded irrevocable power to a faction totally unfit to wield it, were not long of perceiving the consequences to which their blind trust in republican virtue in a corrupted society was likely to lead. As the day for the elections and filling up the supplementary seats drew nigh, the public effervescence hourly increased. Clubs, juntas, assemblies, resounded

on all sides ; the press multiplied in extent and increased in violence ; and that general anxiety was felt which, by a strange instinct in the moral equally as the physical world, precedes the heaving of the earthquake. It was soon found that the torrent was irresistible. Rank, experience, age, learning, consideration, were almost everywhere disregarded in the candidates ; and republican zeal, loud professions, vehement declamation, impassioned eloquence, constituted the only passports to public favour. Before the elections, three-fourths of which were conducted within the walls of Cadiz, were half over, it had become evident that the democratic party had acquired a decisive ascendancy. Then, and not till then, a large proportion of those who had supported or acquiesced in these frantic innovations became sensible of their error, tried to pause in their career, and soon began to declaim loudly against the Cortes of their own creation. But it was too late : popular passion was not only excited, but unchained ; and the march of revolution had become inevitable, because aristocratic infatuation had installed democratic ambition in supreme power.¹

¹ Tor. iii.
355, 357.
Martignac,
94, 96.

On the 24th of September the Cortes thus constituted commenced their sittings ; that was the first day of the SPANISH REVOLUTION. They began, like the French National Assembly in 1789, with religious ceremonies and the forms of the monarchy. High mass was celebrated in their presence by the Archbishop Bourbon, and an oath binding them to maintain the Roman Catholic faith, the integrity of the monarchy, the rights of Ferdinand VII., and the national institutions, so far as not requiring amendment, was administered to and taken by all the members. From thence they adjourned to the hall prepared for their reception in the principal theatre in the city ; and then it soon appeared that the influence to which they were exposed would speedily prove fatal alike to the religion, the monarchy, and the con-

15.
Opening
and early
proceedings
of the
Cortes.
Sept. 24.

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stitution of the country. The saloon was spacious and elegant; but the immense crowds of both sexes who occupied, as spectators, the upper tier of boxes, and the vehement applause with which all the most violent republican sentiments were received, soon demonstrated that the Cortes were to be subjected to that external seduction and intimidation which a popular assembly is rarely, if ever, able to resist. From the outset, accordingly, the character of their proceedings was pronounced; it at once appeared that a new era in the domestic history of the Peninsula had arisen. The preceding movement, although violent and sanguinary, had, with a few local exceptions, been of a different character—it was national and anti-Gallican. This was social and democratic. Though still engaged in the French war, and resisting with unconquerable firmness alike the open hostility and insidious propositions of the French ruler, the principal object of the Cortes after this was not foreign but domestic; it was not external independence, but internal reform, on which their hearts were set; and, trusting to the impregnable walls of Cadiz for their immediate security, and to the English arms for their ultimate deliverance, they concentrated all their efforts upon the dissemination of republican institutions, and the establishment of republican ascendancy in their country. In this attempt they were from the very first completely triumphant, and incalculable results in both hemispheres have flowed from their success.¹

¹ Tor. iii.
356, 363.
Mart. 97,
98.

16.
They pro-
claim the
sovereignty
of the peo-
ple.

The very first resolution with which the Cortes commenced was decisive of the character of the assembly, and destructive of the institutions of a mixed monarchy. It bore, "That the deputies who compose the congress, and represent the Spanish nation, declare themselves legitimately constituted in the general and extraordinary Cortes, *in which is placed the national sovereignty.*" The members of the regency were required to swear obedience "to the sovereignty of the nation, represented by the

Cortes, and to obey its decrees." These, and many similar resolutions, were carried unanimously, amidst the loud applause of the members and galleries; the debates were prolonged till midnight amidst a delirium of unanimity; extempore speeches, unknown hitherto in southern Europe, fraught with eloquence, bespoke at once the ability and fervour of the speakers; and the regency, with the exception of the Bishop of Orense, who had courage enough to resist the innovation, abandoned by all, and confounded by the violence of the torrent, took the oath at four in the following morning, and thereby virtually converted the monarchy into a "democracy."¹

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¹ Tor. iii.
361, 375.
South. vi.
84, 87.

Having gained this great triumph, the Cortes were not long of following up their advantage. On the very next day, it was declared that they should be addressed by the title of Majesty, and that all the authorities, civil, ecclesiastical, and military, should take the oath in the same terms as the members of the regency had done. Alarmed at the responsibility thus imposed upon them by so excited an assembly, the regency anxiously requested an explanation of the meaning of the Cortes in this particular; but all that they could obtain was a vague declaration, "that their duties embraced the security and defence of the country, and that the responsibility which was exacted from the members of the regency excluded only the absolute inviolability of the person of the king." The Bishop of Orense, with patriotic fervour, endeavoured to stem the torrent: he openly combated the oath exacted from the regency, and denounced in no measured terms the usurpation of supreme power of which the Cortes had been guilty. No one, however, had courage sufficient to imitate the example of his firmness; and, after several months spent in fruitless resistance, he was forced to submit, and withdrew to his diocese in Galicia, to shun, if he could not prevent, the approaching calamities. The regents being wholly destitute of real authority, and subject to the responsibility of office without its powers,

17.
Fresh as-
sumptions
of supreme
power by
the Cortes.

Feb. 3,
1811.
Oct. 28,
1810.

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¹ Tor. iii.
377, 391.
South. v.
87, 94.

soon after resigned their situations; and they were immediately banished from the island of Leon, to distant and different places. New functionaries were appointed, more obsequious to the will of the popular assembly; but none of them had the courage to refuse the oath of sovereignty to that body, and it was universally felt that they were merely puppets in the hands of their imperious masters.¹

18.
Decree on
the liberty
of the press.

The most momentous topic which can occupy the attention of a popular government—the liberty of the press—early attracted the notice of the Cortes. In the debates which ensued on this interesting subject, the different parties assumed a regular form and consistency; and it soon appeared how little the ardent spirits who had obtained the command in its deliberations, were inclined to pause in their career from the most awful example which history afforded of the perils attending it. One member openly expressed a wish for a “Christian Robespierre;” another declared that “*un pequeno*” Robespierre was what was required—a person who might establish a system of terror somewhat more moderate than had been used in France. “Caustic,” it was said, “is what is called for: matters must be carried on with energy: heads must be struck off, and that speedily: more Spanish blood requires to be shed than French.” “The hatchet of the executioner is the only answer to oppose to such arguments,” said an infuriated priest; “I am willing to undertake the office of such a debater. We have been assembled six months, and not one head has fallen.” These extreme opinions, it is true, were not approved by the majority of the assembly; and several speakers, having the eloquent Arguelles at their head, referred to England as the great example of the unconquerable energy which the freedom of the press can communicate to a nation, at the very time that it spreads the antidote to the passions and the errors of an excited democracy. But the very fact of such opinions being

advocated by any party, however extreme, in the legislature, was a clear indication of the perilous torrent which had been let loose; and it was already but too evident that in this, as in all other social contests during the *advance* of a revolution, the most violent opinions were likely to be the most successful. After a protracted debate, which lasted four days, the freedom of the press was established, under no other qualification than the exception of offences against religion, which were still to be taken cognisance of by the ordinary ecclesiastical courts, and a certain responsibility for individual or political delinquencies, which were to be adjudicated upon in a certain court erected for the purpose. The decree was promulgated in the middle of November; and there immediately issued from the press such a deluge of journals and ephemeral pamphlets, and such unmeasured vehemence of language, as demonstrated both how anxiously the Spanish urban population had thirsted for political discussion, and the imminent danger which they would run from the draught when first administered.¹

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Nov. 10.

¹ Mart. i.
94, 95. Tor.
iii. 415, 426.
Diario de
Cortes, ii.
441. South.
v. 99, 101.

At this period, also, there began those important discussions between Spain and the South American colonies, which terminated, after a protracted contest and the shedding of oceans of blood, in the independence of those extensive and highly interesting states. This topic, however, is too vast for casual discussion, and must be reserved for a subsequent chapter, when it will form the leading subject of consideration.²

² See *infra*,
ch. lxvii.

It is remarkable that, from the very first opening of the Cortes, they manifested an impatient anxiety to abolish the separate immunities and privileges of the different provinces of Spain; and the *Fueros* of Biscay and Navarre were in an especial manner the object of their jealousy. The desire to extinguish them, and establish one uniform constitution for the whole monarchy, formed one of the leading objects of the party in the Spanish cities who urged on the assembly of the Cortes.

19.
Appoint-
ment of a
committee
to frame a
constitution,
Dec.
23, 1811.

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In pursuance of this desire, a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution on a uniform and systematic plan ; and on its preparation, as might naturally have been expected, the principal attention of all parties at Cadiz was afterwards fixed. It cannot be denied that the project of establishing a perfect equality of civil rights between the members of the same community is equitable in theory, and apparently feasible in practice ; but experience has proved that it is, of all other things, the most difficult to carry with safety into execution ; and that, unless the inhabitants to whom it is applied are homogeneous in point of race, and equally advanced in point of civilisation, it is likely to produce the most disastrous effects upon the whole fabric of society.¹

¹ Tor. iii.
445.

20.
Heroic conduct of the
Cortes in
holding out
against the
French.
Jan. 1,
1811.

In two important particulars the Cortes faithfully represented the feelings of the Spanish people, and exhibited an example of constancy in adverse fortune which will be for ever memorable in the annals of the world. They issued a resolute proclamation, in which they declared that they would “never lay down their arms till they recovered their sovereign, and regained the national independence ; that the whole treaties, resignations of the crown, and proceedings at Bayonne, were null and void, as wanting the consent of the nation ; that all engagements or obligations undertaken by the King while in captivity were illegal and of no effect ; that they would never bend the knee to the usurper, nor treat for peace so long as a French soldier remained in the Peninsula, which they had invaded with such perfidy, and treated with such injustice.” When it is recollected that this decree was issued at a time when the French legions beleaguered the ramparts of Cadiz, and the bombs from their batteries already reached the nearest houses of the city ; that the whole of Spain, with the exception of Galicia, Asturias, and a part of Catalonia and Valencia, was in the possession of the invaders, who had moulded the conquered provinces into a regular

government ; and that Wellington and his gallant army were then cooped up within the lines of Torres Vedras, with hardly any prospect of being able to take an active part in the deliverance of the Peninsula, and but little hope of maintaining themselves on its soil ; it must be confessed that the Spanish historians have good reason to pride themselves on the constancy of their government, and that the annals of the Roman senate contain nothing more sublime.¹

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¹ Decree,
Jan. 1,
1811. Tor.
iii. 450.
South. v.
102.

The other particular in which the Cortes faithfully represented the sentiments of the Spanish people, was in the respect which, in despite of their revolutionary tendency, they evinced to the Roman Catholic faith. Not but that there were many of its ardent spirits secretly enemies not merely to the Romish church, which was there established in its most bigoted form, but to every other species of religious belief ; and who longed for that general overthrow of all ecclesiastical establishments, and liberation from all restraints, human and divine, which in old corrupted societies constitutes the real spring of democratic agitation. But they were as yet too few in number to venture openly to promulgate their principles ; and, unfortunately, when emancipated from the shackles of the Romish creed, they had not judgment and principle enough to revert to the pure tenets of the *Catholic* or universal church, but flew at once into the infidelity and selfishness of the Parisian philosophy. Hence they made no attempts to moderate the fervour of the rural deputies ; but, regarding the whole clerical institutions as an incubus on the state, which would ere long be removed, acquiesced in the mean time in all the declarations of the majority in favour of the ancient faith ; and the Cortes exhibited the prodigy, during a few years, of a body animated with the strongest revolutionary principles, and yet professing the most implicit obedience to the rigid principles of the church of Rome.²

^{21.}
Their rigid
adherence
to the Ro-
mish faith.

² South. v.
107, 108.
Tor iii. 418,
423.

The influence of these conflicting principles, and of the

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Principles
of the con-
stitution of
1812.
March 19.

antagonist passions which in every age have most profoundly agitated society, signally appeared in the character of the constitution, which, after more than a year's discussion in the committee appointed to draw it up, and in the assembly, was finally approved of and sworn to by the Cortes on the 19th March 1812. The leading principles of this celebrated legislative fabric, which has become of such immense importance from subsequent events, were such as might have been expected from the composition of the assembly in which it originated. Supreme sovereignty was declared to reside in the nation; the Roman Catholic faith to be the sole religion of the state; the supreme legislative power to reside in the Cortes. That assembly was alone empowered to vote taxes and levies of men—to lay down regulations for the armed force—to nominate the supreme judges—to create a regency in the case of minority, incapacity, or other event suspensive of the succession—to enforce the responsibility of all public functionaries—and to introduce and enact laws. During the intervals of the session, the Cortes was to be represented by a permanent commission or deputation, to which a considerable part of its powers was committed, especially the care of watching over the execution of the laws and conduct of public functionaries, and the convocation of the assembly in case of need.¹

¹ Martignac,
97. Consti-
tution of
1812. Tit.
ii. iii.

23.
Powers of
the king.

The person of the king was declared inviolable, and his consent was requisite to the passing of laws; but he could not withhold his consent more than twice to different legislatures; if presented to him a third time, *he was forced to give his sanction*. He had the prerogative of pardon, but circumscribed within very narrow limits; he concluded treaties and truces with foreign powers, but they required for their ratification the consent of the Cortes; he had the command of the army, but all the regulations for its government were to emanate from the same body; he nominated the public functionaries, but only from a list furnished by the Cortes. The king was

not to leave the kingdom nor to marry without their consent ; if he did so, he was to be held as having abdicated the throne. The nomination of the judges of the tribunals, to whose exclusive cognisance the conduct of public functionaries was subjected, was reserved to the same assembly. For the assistance of the king in discharging his royal functions, a privy council, consisting of forty members, was appointed by him out of a list of one hundred and twenty presented by the Cortes: they could not be removed but by that body ; and, in that number, there were only to be four grandees and four ecclesiastics. All vacant situations in the church, the bench, and the diplomatic departments, in like manner, were filled up by the king from a list of three presented to him by the Cortes ; and he was bound to consult the privy council in all matters of importance, particularly the conclusion of treaties, the sanction of laws, the declaration of war, and the conclusion of peace.¹

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¹ Mart. 17,
98. Tor. iv.
341, 342.

Important as these institutions were in their tendency, and strongly as they savoured of that democratic spirit amidst which they were cradled, they yet yielded in magnitude to the vitality of the changes in the election and composition of the Cortes, which were established by the same constitution. It was carried by a large majority that the assembly should sit, as it was then constituted, in a single chamber, without, as of old, any separate place of assembly for the clergy or nobles, or any veto or power of rejection being vested in their members apart from those of the commons. Population was made the basis of representation : it was declared that there should be a member for every seventy thousand souls ; and that every man above the age of twenty-five, a native of the province, or who had resided in it for seven years, was qualified alike to elect or to be elected. No property was for the present insisted on as a qualification ; but it was left to future Cortes to legislate on this important point. The election of members took place by three successive

24.
Constitution of the
Cortes.

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steps of parishes, districts, and provinces ; but the boroughs, who sent members to the ancient assemblies, and the juntas, who were admitted to the representation in the present, were alike excluded. The American colonies were placed on a perfect equality, in the article of representation, with the European provinces of the monarchy ; the ministers, councillors, and persons in the household of the king, were excluded from a seat in the assembly ; the Cortes were to assemble every year, and to sit at least three months for the despatch of business ; no member of it was to be capable of holding any office under the crown ; it was to be re-elected every two years, and no individual who had been the member of one assembly could be re-elected till a different legislature had intervened. Thus the Cortes, every two years, was to present an entirely new set of members from that which had preceded it. The authors of the constitution had adopted the American principle of rotation of office, and were determined that acquaintance with, or fitness for, the duties of government should be a perpetual bar to the enjoyment of its powers.¹

¹ Tor. iv.
328, 331.

25.
Its vast
effect in
stimulating
political
passions in
the Penin-
sula.

Such was the famous constitution of 1812—the Magna Charta of southern revolutionary Europe—the model on which the subsequent democratic constitutions of Spain, Portugal, Piedmont, and Naples, in 1820, were framed ; the brand which has filled the world with its flames, and from the conflagration raised by which both hemispheres are still burning. To an Englishman practically acquainted with the working of a free constitution, it is needless to expatiate on the necessary effect of vesting such powers in the people of an old state. If he reflects how long the institutions of England, habituated as she has been to the strain by centuries of freedom, could withstand the influence of universal suffrage, annual parliaments, the abolition of the House of Peers, the withdrawing of the legislative veto from the sovereign, an entire change of legislators every two years, and the practical vesting of

the disposal of all offices of importance in the House of Commons ; he will easily understand what must have been the result of such a system among a people of mixed blood and hostile passions, of fiery temperament and towering ambition ; long subjected to despotism, wholly unused to freedom ; among whom political fervour was as yet untamed by suffering, and philanthropic ardour uncooled by experience ; where property, accumulated in huge masses among the nobles and clergy, was but scantily diffused through the middle classes ; and instruction was still more thinly scattered among any ranks of the people. But it was the fatal peculiarity of this constitution, that it so obviously and immediately opened the avenue to supreme power to the *urban* constituencies, and so entirely shut out and disinherited the *rural* nobility, and ecclesiastic orders and rural population, that it necessarily bequeathed the seeds of interminable discord between these classes to future ages ; because it gave a definite object and intelligent war-cry to the minority, massed together, and in possession of the principal seats of influence in towns, while it established a system altogether insupportable to the majority, tenfold greater, but scattered, and destitute of defence or rallying points in the country.

The reception which the new constitution met with in Spain was such as might have been expected with regard to so great an innovation, in a country in which the urban constituencies were so zealous for change, and the rural inhabitants were so firmly attached to the institutions of their fathers. At Cadiz, Barcelona, Valencia, and in general all the great towns, especially those of a commercial habit, the enthusiasm of the people at this great addition to their power was loudly and sincerely expressed : in the lesser boroughs in the interior, and in all the rural districts, where revolutionary ideas had not spread, and the ancient faith and loyalty were still all-powerful, it was the object of unqualified hatred. In

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26.
Manner in
which the
constitution
was received
in Spain.

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vain the partisans of the new regime sought to persuade the people that the constitution was but a return to the old usages of the monarchy, cleared of the corruptions and abuses of ages. The good sense of the country inhabitants revolted at the idea that the King of Spain of old had been merely a puppet in the hands of the populace. The clergy could never see a confirmation of their privileges in institutions which, on the other side of the Pyrenees, had led to their total overthrow; the nobles beheld, in the concentration of all power in the hands of an assembly elected by universal suffrage, the certain forerunner of their total ruin. The provinces in the occupation of the French, which had sent no representatives to the Isle of Leon, embracing three-fourths of the monarchy, loudly complained that their rights and privileges had been reft from them by an assembly almost wholly elected at Cadiz, to which they were entire strangers. Thus the whole country population were unanimous in their detestation of the new order of things; and it was easy to foresee that, if the matter were to be determined by the nation itself, the constitution would be rejected by an immense majority. But the partisans of the new constitution, though few in number, were incomparably better organised and favourably situated for active operations than their antagonists; the provinces adverse to it, though five to one in point of numbers, were for the most part in possession of the French troops, and could take no part in the elections; and the party favourable to it being already intrenched in the principal strongholds of the kingdom, it was hard to say to which side, in the event of a struggle, victory might ultimately incline.¹

¹ Martignac,
i. 99, 100.

Wellington, from the very first, clearly perceived, and loudly denounced, the pernicious tendency of these measures on the part of the Spanish Cortes, not merely as diverting the attention of the government from the national defence, and wasting their time in fruitless discussions

when the enemy was at their gates, but as tending to establish democratic principles and republican institutions in a country wholly unfitted for them, and which would leave to future ages the seeds of interminable discord in the Spanish monarchy. His prophecies, which are to be found profusely scattered throughout the later volumes of his correspondence, little attended to at the time from the absorbing interest of the contest with Napoleon, have now acquired an extraordinary interest, from the exact and melancholy accomplishment which subsequent events have given to his predictions. Before the Cortes had been assembled six weeks, he expressed to his brother, Henry Wellesley, then ambassador at Cadiz, his apprehensions that they were about to follow the usual course of democratic assemblies, and draw to themselves, in opposition to the wishes of the great bulk of the nation, the whole powers of government.* As they advanced in their career, and experience began to develop the practical result of their administration in the provinces, he repeatedly expressed his conviction of the general dissatisfaction which they had excited, and the very serious dangers to which they were urging the nation.^{1†}

But after his visit to Cadiz, on occasion of being appointed generalissimo of the Spanish armies in January 1813, he denounced, in the strongest terms, the wretched

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27.

Wellington's clear perception and curious predictions of the effects of the Cortes and new constitution.

¹ Gurw. vi. 559, ix. 524, x. 54.

* "The natural course of all popular assemblies—of the Spanish Cortes, among others—is to adopt democratic principles, and to vest all the powers of the state in their own body; and this assembly must take care that they do not run in this tempting course, as the wishes of the nation are decidedly for a monarchy. By a monarchy alone it can be governed; and their inclination to any other form of government, and their assumption of the power and patronage of the state into their own hands, would immediately deprive them of the confidence of the people, and render them a worse government, and more impotent, because more numerous, than the central junta."—WELLINGTON to H. WELLESLEY, *Nov. 4, 1810*; GURWOOD, iv. 559.

† "The Cortes are unpopular everywhere, and in my opinion deservedly so. Nothing can be more cruel, absurd, and impolitic, than their decrees respecting the persons who have served the enemy. It is extraordinary that the revolution in Spain has not produced one man with any knowledge of the real situation of the country. It appears as if they were all drunk; thinking and speaking of any other subject than Spain."—WELLINGTON to H. WELLESLEY, *1st Nov. 1812*; GURWOOD, ix. 524.

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LXV.

1812.

28.

His clear
opinion on
the subject
after visit-
ing Cadiz in
the spring
of 1813.

government, at once tyrannical at home and weak abroad, which the furious democracy of that city had produced ; and predicted the ruinous effect both upon the fate of the war and the future prospects of the monarchy, of the constitution which they had established.* His words, after a close personal view of the working of the democratic constitution, are deserving of profound attention, as designating the impression produced on an intellect of the highest order, by a state of things arising from the success of popular ambition, and therefore of lasting interest to mankind. "The greatest objection which I have to the new constitution is, that in a country in which almost all property consists in land, and there are the largest landed proprietors which exist in Europe, no measure should have been adopted, and no barrier provided, to guard landed property from the encroachments, injustice, and violence to which it is at all times liable, but particularly in the progress of revolutions. The council of state affords no such guard ; it has no influence in the legislature ; it can have no influence over the public mind. Such a guard can only be afforded by the establishment of an assembly of the great landed proprietors, such as our House of Lords, having concurrent powers with the Cortes ; and you may depend upon it, there is no man in Spain, be his property ever so small, who is not interested in the establishment of such an assembly.

* "It is impossible to describe the state of confusion in which affairs are at Cadiz. The Cortes have formed a constitution very much on the principle that a painter paints a picture—viz. to be looked at ; and I have not met one of its members, or any person of any description, either at Cadiz or elsewhere, who considers the constitution as the embodying of a system according to which Spain is or can be governed. The Cortes have in form divested themselves of the executive power, and appointed a regency for that purpose : but the regency are in fact the slaves of the Cortes ; and neither have either communication in a constitutional way with each other, nor any authority beyond the walls of Cadiz. I wish that some of our reformers would go to Cadiz to see the benefit of a sovereign popular assembly calling itself 'Majesty,' and of a written constitution. In truth, there is no authority in the state except the libellous newspapers, and they certainly ride over both Cortes and Regency without mercy."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, *Cadiz*, 27th Jan. 1813 ; GURWOOD, x. 54.

Unhappily, legislative assemblies are swayed by the fears and passions of individuals : when unchecked, they are tyrannical and unjust ; nay, more, it frequently happens that the most tyrannical and unjust measures are the most popular. Those measures are particularly popular which deprive rich and powerful individuals of their properties under the pretence of the public advantage ; and I tremble for a country in which, as in Spain, there is *no barrier for the preservation of private property, excepting the justice of a legislative assembly possessing supreme power*. It is impossible to calculate upon the plans of such an assembly : they have no check whatever, and they are governed by the most ignorant and licentious of all licentious presses, that of Cadiz. I believe they mean to attack the royal and feudal tenths, and the tithes of the church, under pretence of encouraging agriculture ; and, finding the contributions from these sources not so extensive as they expected, they will seize the estates of the *grandees*. Our character is involved in a greater degree than we are aware of, in the democratical transactions of the Cortes, in the opinion of all moderate well-thinking Spaniards, and, I am afraid, with the rest of Europe. It is quite impossible such a system can last : what I regret is, that I am the person who maintains it. If the King should return, he also will overturn the whole fabric if he has any spirit ; but the gentlemen at Cadiz are so completely masters, that I am afraid there must be another convulsion.”¹

The British government were well aware, while democratic frenzy was thus reigning triumphant at Cadiz, from the despatches of their ambassador there, the Honourable H. Wellesley, as well as from Wellington’s information of the dangerous nature of the spirit which had thus been evolved, that they had a task of no ordinary difficulty to encounter, in any attempt to moderate its transports. The Spanish people, long and proverbially jealous of foreign interference, had recently evinced this

¹ Wellington to Don Diego de la Vega, Jan. 29, 1813; and Earl Bathurst, April 21, 1813. *Gaz.* x. 64, 65, 247, xi. 91.

29.
Wise policy of the British government regarding the Cortes.

CHAP.
LXV.

1810.

peculiarity in so remarkable a degree, that even when defeated in a hundred encounters, and bleeding at every pore from the want of any general competent to stem the progress of disaster, and give unity to the operations of their different armies, they still refused to give the command to the British hero who had arrested at Talavera the tide of success, and rolled back from Torres Vedras the wave of conquest, even though he has recorded his opinion, that, if they had done so, he could have saved their country as he did Portugal.* In these circumstances, any decided or marked interference on the part of Great Britain with the proceedings either of the Cortes at Cadiz, or of the regency in its formation, would not only, in all probability, have totally failed in its object, but possibly have cooled their ardour in the cause of independence, and thrown the party in Spain, in possession of the few remaining strongholds it possessed, headlong into the arms of the enemy. In these circumstances, the British cabinet, albeit noways insensible to the dangers of the republican government which had thus grown up, as it were, under their very wing at Cadiz, and its strange inconsistency with their own principles, as well as those on which the war had been conducted, nevertheless deemed it expedient not to intermeddle with the internal affairs of their ally, and to comply literally with the advice of Wellington, "to keep themselves clear of the democracy, and to interfere in nothing while the government was in their hands, excepting in carrying on the war and keeping out the foreign enemy."¹

It was chiefly with a view, however, to obtain a legitimate head for the government at Cadiz, and if possible extricate Spain by legal means from the abyss into which

1 Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Sept. 5, 1813. Gur. xi. 91.

* "I understand the Spanish government may perhaps offer me the command of their armies. If they had done so a year and a half ago, and they had set seriously to work to feed and pay their army, the cause would have been saved; nay, it would have been saved without such an arrangement, if the battle of Ocana had not been fought in November 1809."—WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL, 2d Feb. 1811; GURWOOD, vii. 216.

she was falling, that the English cabinet at this time made a serious attempt to effect the deliverance of Ferdinand VII. from his imprisonment at Valençay. The captive king, and his brother Don Carlos, were there detained, living sumptuously, but so narrowly watched as to render their escape apparently impossible. Notwithstanding all the vigilance of the police, however, the British government contrived to communicate with him by means of the Baron Kolli, a man of skilful address and intrepid character, in whom the Marquis Wellesley had entire confidence. The project for their deliverance, when on the point of succeeding, was betrayed by an agent to whom a subordinate part in its execution had been committed. Ferdinand himself revealed the plot to his jailors, and Kolli was arrested and committed to Vincennes. He refused, however, with unshaken constancy, to divulge anything which could involve either Ferdinand or the British ministry; but the French police took advantage of the discovery they had made, to endeavour to entrap the royal captives into some hazardous attempt by means of a false Kolli, who was despatched to Valençay. The penetration of the Spanish king, however, detected the disguise, and nothing followed on the insidious attempt.¹

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LXV.

1810.

30.

Abortive
attempt to
effect the
liberation of
Ferdinand
VII.March 24,
1810.¹ Hard. xi.
150. Bign.
ix. 448.

The military condition of the French in Spain, notwithstanding the disastrous issue of the expedition into Portugal, had been essentially improved, so far as the command of the resources of the country went, in the course of the campaign of 1810. The successful irruption of Soult into Andalusia, in its commencement, had given them the entire disposal of the riches and harvests of that opulent province; and although the dispersion of force which it occasioned, in consequence of the continued resistance of Cadiz, proved in the end, as the event showed, extremely detrimental to their interests in the Peninsula; yet in the first instance it greatly augmented the means at their disposal, and diffused the pleasing

31.

Military
condition
of the
French in
Spain in
spring
1811.

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LXV.

1810.

Feb. 5,
1810.

hope, which seems to have gained possession of all the counsellors of Joseph, that the war was at length approaching its termination. So completely did hostilities appear to be concluded to the south of the Sierra Morena, that Joseph Buonaparte crossed that formidable barrier; published at Cordova an ominous decree, in which he declared, that "if Spain became again the friend of France, it was for the interest of Napoleon to preserve its integrity; if not, to dismember and destroy it:" entered Seville amidst the acclamations of the higher class of citizens, who were fatigued with the war, and hopeless of its success; received from the civic authorities there the standards taken at the battle of Baylen; accepted the attendance of a royal guard, organised for his service in the southern provinces; and, amidst the apparent transports of the people, arrived at the lines before Cadiz, and made the tour of the bay almost within reach of the Spanish batteries. Seduced by these flattering appearances, the monarch appears for a time to have indulged the pleasing hope that his difficulties were at an end; that all classes of Spaniards would at length rally round his standard; and that, supported by his faithful population, he might at length obtain not merely the shadow but the substance of a throne, emancipated from the burdensome tutelage of his imperial brother.¹

¹ Bign. ix.
269, 271.
Hard. xi.
151.

^{32.}
Napoleon's
intentions as
to dismem-
bering Spain
at this time.
Feb. 8.

But if Joseph for a brief period gave way to this pleasing illusion, he was not long of being awakened from it by the acts of Napoleon himself. Early in February a decree was issued by him, which organised into four governments the provinces of Catalonia, Aragon, Biscay, and Navarre; and charged the military governor of each of them with the entire direction of affairs, civil and military. The police, the administration of justice, the collection and disposal of the revenue, were intrusted to them equally with the warlike arrangements of the provinces; and the fundamental condition on which this

more than regal power was held by the marshals was, that they should make no demands on the imperial treasury, and that the districts under their command should feed, clothe, lodge, and pay the numerous French corps which occupied them. Deeper designs, however, than the temporary occupation of a portion of the Spanish monarchy, the whole of which was overrun by his troops, were involved in this decree of the Emperor; and what these designs were are explained in a letter of this period from the Duke of Cadore (Champagny) to the French ambassador at Madrid:—"The intention of the Emperor is to *unite to France the whole left bank of the Ebro*, and perhaps the territory as far as the Douro. One of the objects of the decree is to prepare for that annexation; and you will take care, without letting a hint fall as to the designs of the Emperor, to prepare matters for this change, and facilitate all the measures which his majesty may take to carry it into execution." Thus Napoleon, after having solemnly guaranteed the integrity of Spain, first by the treaty of Fontainebleau to Ferdinand VII., and again by that of Bayonne to Joseph, was now preparing, in violation of both engagements, to seize a large part of its territory, and one which commanded the whole remainder of it, by the spoliation of his own brother, whom he had put upon the throne.¹

Notwithstanding all the precautions of the Emperor, however, to keep his designs secret, they transpired so far as to awaken in Joseph the most anxious solicitude as to the preservation of his crown and the integrity of his dominions. To avert the stroke as far as possible, under pretence of congratulating his brother on his marriage with the Austrian archduchess, he despatched to Paris M. Asanza, an intrepid and able Spaniard, zealous for the interests of his country, and peculiarly solicitous of preserving the province of his birth, Navarre, for the crown of Castile. Asanza, on his arrival at Paris, found that the expense of the Spanish war, which it was said had already

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LXV.

1810.

Feb. 19,
1810.

¹ Champagny to Delaforest, Feb. 19, 1810. Bign. ix. 270, 274.

33.
Negotiation between Napoleon and Joseph for the dismemberment of Spain.

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LXV.

1810.

cost the imperial treasury above two hundred millions of francs (£8,000,000,) was the great subject of complaint with the cabinet of St Cloud; and without openly divulging the project of incorporating with France the territory north of the Ebro, Champagny made no secret of the wish of the Emperor to obtain, and his right to demand, more valuable indemnities than the barren satisfaction of having placed an incapable and prodigal brother on the throne of Madrid. When Asanza pleaded strongly for the integrity of Spain, and the obligation of the Emperor to support his brother, he was openly told by the imperial minister, that, strong as the Emperor's obligations to the members of his family were, his obligations to France were still stronger; and that "Joseph would do well to recollect that he held in his power the Prince of Asturias, Ferdinand, whom he was strongly tempted to send into Spain, and who would make no scruple, as the price of his liberty, to cede the required provinces, or anything else which might be required of him."¹*

¹ Asanza's letter, July 20, 1810.

34.

Decree establishing French military governments in the north of Spain.

May 29.

Asanza, unable either to fathom the secret intentions or get any satisfaction as to the public deeds of the Emperor, returned downcast to Madrid, where general gloom had succeeded to the first transports of joy among the adherents of Joseph at the conquest of Andalusia; and unequivocal acts on the part of Napoleon soon demonstrated his real designs, and at what price he estimated the phantom of a king which he had established in Spain. A fresh decree, in addition to that which had created the four military governments already established, formed two new ones, embracing the whole country to the north of the Douro; the first of these comprising the province of Burgos; the second, those of Valladolid, Palencia, and Toro: and this was soon followed by another, which gave

Aug. 2.

* The letters of Asanza to the court of Madrid were intercepted by the guerillas, forwarded to Cadiz, and published by the Regency. Wellington quotes, and Bignon refers to them, without either throwing the slightest doubt on their authenticity or accuracy.—See Bignon, ix. 280.

Soult the exclusive direction of the army and the provinces to the south of the Sierra Morena. Thus, while Suchet was actively conducting the work of conquest in Catalonia and Valencia, and Soult was living in regal magnificence at Seville, the unhappy Joseph, almost destitute of resources, lingered on, a shadow, at Madrid, without either being intrusted with the duties, or enjoying the splendour of royalty.¹

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LXV.
1810.

¹ See Asanza to Joseph, July 1811. Bign. ix. 278, 285. Hard. xi. 152, 155.

Napoleon's favourite project of securing the northern provinces of the Peninsula for himself soon assumed a more tangible form, and became the subject of open negotiation with the cabinet of Madrid. In this negotiation, the plenipotentiaries of Spain in vain appealed to the treaty of Bayonne, by which the integrity of the monarchy was guaranteed. Champagny replied, in the name of the Emperor, and from his dictation, that the convention of Bayonne had *de facto* disappeared, by the majority of its members having passed over to the insurgents; that Spain owed a large indemnity for the sacrifices in men and money which he had made in her behalf; and that, as she could never repay the debt, he must insist on the cession of the whole provinces to the north of the Ebro, including Catalonia, for ten years. Finding the Emperor resolute, the Spanish plenipotentiaries strove only to gain time: the more pressing concerns of the north engrossed his attention; and, before his dominion in the Peninsula was so well established as to render it practicable to carry the transference formally into effect, the whole country was reft alike from France and Joseph by the arms of England, and the star of Napoleon had begun to set amid the snows of Russia.²

35.
Efforts of the Spanish envoys to prevent the dismemberment.

² Bign. ix. 285, 287. Hard. xi. 154, 155.

Such, however, was the destitution to which the court of Madrid was reduced, during the whole of the winter of 1810 and spring of 1811, that in January 1811, Joseph intimated to Napoleon, "that the French marshals intercepted his revenue, disregarded his orders, insulted his government, and oppressed and ruined his country.

36.
Joseph in disgust at length resigns his crown. Jan. 19, 1811.

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LXV.

1811.

Jan. 28,
1811.

He himself had been appointed to the throne of Spain without his own consent; and though he would never oppose the Emperor's will, yet he would not live a degraded king; and therefore he was ready to resign, unless the Emperor would come in person and remedy the evils." Struck with the decision of this announcement, and the obvious justice of the complaints on which it was founded, the Emperor so far interposed in behalf of his unhappy brother, as to fix, by an imperial edict, the monthly sums at which the allowance of the whole military officers of the Peninsula, from the marshals, governors of provinces, to the sub-lieutenants, should be fixed; and directed that 500,000 francs (£20,000) should be remitted monthly from Paris to defray the most urgent demands of his household. This relief, however, proved altogether insufficient. The whole civil functionaries of the crown were seven months in arrear of their salaries; the public treasury was empty; the king had not money at his disposal to give a respectable dinner to the ambassadors; and he was incessantly besieged with complaints of oppression, which he had no means of relieving. To such a height at length did the mortifications of the court of Madrid arrive, and so completely were all the royal revenues intercepted by the legal or illegal exactions of the marshals, that, in the beginning of May, Joseph set out from Madrid, and, to Napoleon's no small embarrassment, arrived in Paris to lay his resignation at his feet. Thus was the prodigy exhibited, not merely of three brothers of a soldier of fortune from Corsica being elevated by that soldier to European thrones; but of two of them, Louis and Joseph, being reduced to such mortifications, by his imperious temper and rigorous exactions, that they renounced their crowns to escape them; while another brother, Lucien, had found refuge from his persecution in the dominions of his most persevering and inveterate enemy.¹

May 29,
1811.

¹ See Joseph's papers taken at Vitoria. Nap. iv. 517, 533. App.

Napoleon, who was well aware what a subject of

scandal these divisions in the imperial family would afford to Europe, and how strongly they would confirm the declamations of the English press against the insupportable nature of his rule, did his utmost to appease the incensed monarch. Partly by argument, partly by persuasion, partly by threats, he prevailed on the fugitive king to place again on his head his crown of thorns: and, after some weeks' residence at Paris, he returned to Madrid, having concluded a private treaty, which in some degree obviated the most intolerable of his grievances. By this compact it was stipulated that the army of the centre should be placed directly under the orders of the King of Spain: he was to receive a quarter of the contributions levied by the marshals in their several provinces, for the maintenance of his court and government, and for the support of the army of the centre, and of the Spaniards who had enlisted in his service, who amounted to nearly thirty thousand men; and the half million of francs, hitherto given monthly to the King, was to be increased to a million. But the Emperor would not relinquish the military direction of the war, or the command of the provinces by his marshals; they were still to correspond with Berthier, and take all their directions from the Tuileries. Napoleon also strongly counselled the convocation of a Cortes at Madrid to consider the state of the nation, and form a set-off against that assembled in the Island of Leon, which he characterised as "a miserable canaille of obscure agitators." By these promises and injunctions Joseph was for the time pacified; and he returned to Madrid in July, where his situation appeared for a while to be improved by the successes of Marshal Suchet in the east of Spain. But the promised remittances from Paris were never made regularly; the former disputes with the marshals about the contributions revived; the project of the Cortes was adjourned from Wellington's successes in the next campaign;¹ and, in less than two years, nothing remained of Joseph's govern-

CHAP.
LXV.

1811.

37.

Terms of accommodation between him and Napoleon.

July 1811.

June 1811.

July 14.

¹ Nap. iv. 126, 127. Papers taken at Vitoria. Ibid. iv. 533, 547, App.

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LXV.

1811.

ment but the recollection of the oppression of which he had been the impotent spectator, and the privations of which he had been the real victim.

38.
Prosperous
condition of
the French
at this
period in
Spain.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

While the governments of France and Spain were thus arranging between themselves the proportions in which they were to divide between each other the spoils of the Peninsula, and Napoleon was securing the lion's share to himself, a lingering but unconquerable resistance was still presented in the few strongholds which remained in the hands of the patriots. It was in a very few quarters, however, that the contest was continued: the greater part of the country was subdued; its resources were almost all at the conqueror's disposal; and, in a military point of view, the conquest might be considered as complete. Both the Castiles, with the capital, were in the victor's power: Andalusia and Granada, with their rich and hitherto untouched fields of plunder, were at his disposal; and the northern provinces, including the passes of the Pyrenees, the whole of Aragon, and the greater part of Catalonia, were strongly garrisoned by his troops. The recent successes in the latter province, particularly the fall of Gerona, Hostalrich, Lerida, and Mequinenza, had both opened to the French arms the road from Perpignan to Barcelona, and established them in a solid manner on the Ebro; and nothing was wanting but the conquest of Tortosa and Tarragona to enable Suchet to carry his victorious arms into Valencia, and subject the whole eastern provinces to the Emperor's sway. On the other side, they were still excluded from the kingdom of Portugal, and a disastrous campaign had followed the invasion of that country; but the English armies appeared in no sufficient strength to disturb them beyond the Spanish frontier; and the possession of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz promised to secure the Castiles against any serious incursion from their ancient antagonists in that quarter.¹

Great as the extent of territory occupied by the French

¹ Belm. i.
185. Nap.
iv. 51.

generals was, the forces at their disposal were fully equal to their necessities. Seventy-five thousand men in Andalusia, under the command of Soult, maintained the blockade of Cadiz, retained the whole provinces to the south of the Sierra Morena in subjection, and watched over the security of Badajoz, on the Portuguese frontier. Fifty thousand were still ready in Leon to assemble round the standard of Marmont, who had succeeded Massena in the command of the army of Portugal; sixty thousand more, under Bessières, at Valladolid, Biscay, and Leon, watched the Spanish force at the entrance of the Galician defiles, and secured the important line of communication by Vitoria to Bayonne; while in the eastern provinces, Macdonald, with forty-five thousand men, lay at Gerona and Hostalrich, guarding the important entrance by Perpignan into Catalonia. Suchet, after providing for all his fortresses, could still bring thirty thousand excellent troops into the field for active operations; while twenty thousand more under Joseph and Jourdan at Madrid, and fifteen thousand under Reynier, in Estremadura and La Mancha, overawed the capital, and maintained the communication between the different parts of this immense military establishment.¹ *

CHAP.
LXV.
1810.
39.
Distribu-
tion of their
forces.

¹ Imperial
Muster
Rolls, April
1811. Nap-
ier, iii. 570,
571, and iv.
51. Belm. i.
185.

The vital point of native resistance to all this stupendous array was to be found within the walls of Cadiz; but, though the force there was above twenty thousand strong, yet it was composed of such various nations, and in great part so disorganised and depressed, that little reliance could be placed on its efficiency, even for the defence of that last stronghold of Spanish independence. Five thousand English and Portuguese, who arrived immediately after the French troops appeared before its walls in February 1810, from Lisbon and Gibraltar, under General Stewart, were excellent soldiers; but the remaining fifteen thousand, composed of the refugees

40.
Forces as-
sembled in
Cadiz by
the Allies.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXV.

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1810.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiii. § 46.

from Seville, and the gallant men who had come up under Albuquerque,¹ were in the most miserable state, without shoes, pay, or clothing, and hardly any remaining ammunition. The regency was without vigour or consideration ; the public stores were shamefully dilapidated by private cupidity ; and such was the general despondence and confusion which prevailed, that if Victor's troops had, immediately on their arrival at the bay, pushed on and attacked the defences on the isthmus which connected the city with the mainland, they in all probability might have carried them, and, but for the arrival of the English troops, certainly would have done so. As it was, the exterior forts on the mainland side of the bay were abandoned and dismantled in the general consternation ; and from Fort Matagorda, the most advanced and important outwork on their side, the French bombs could reach the upper harbour and a considerable part of the city.²

² Thib. viii.
259, 260,
and Napier,
iii. 173, 174.
Belm. i.
184. Tor.
iii. 196, 197.

41.
Spanish and
British
forces in
the Penin-
sula.

In the other quarters of Spain appearances were, if possible, still more unpromising. Twenty-five thousand men, indeed, in Valencia, and twelve thousand in Murcia, still hoisted the colours of independence ; but their composition, equipment, and discipline, were so wretched that military discernment could already anticipate, what the event soon proved, that no reliance was to be placed on them in the field, and but little in the defence of fortified places. In Catalonia, though a desultory warfare was kept up in the mountains, no force existed capable of keeping the field in the level country ; and the campaign was in reality reduced to the sieges of Tortosa and Tarragona, the last important strongholds which the Spaniards possessed in that province. At the same time, in Galicia, the new levies, nearly fifteen thousand strong, were unable, from their want of discipline, to emerge from their mountain defiles ; and the guerilla parties in the central provinces, though exceedingly harassing to the enemy's communications, were detached

from each other, and altogether inefficient as a force in regular warfare. Thus eighty or ninety thousand men, for the most part ill-disciplined, and worse equipped, shut up in fortified places along the sea-coast, and altogether detached from each other, were all that remained of the Spanish forces, to contend with above three hundred thousand French soldiers, admirably equipped, under the guidance of veteran generals, masters of all the entrances into and main roads through the country, in possession of its principal strongholds, and of the whole interior lines of communication through its provinces. In these circumstances, it required not the gift of prescience to foresee that the weight of the contest would fall on the English and Portuguese army ; and that unless Wellington, with his fifty thousand disciplined soldiers, could strike a decisive blow at the heart of the enemy's power, the cause of the Peninsula, and with it the hope of European independence, was lost.¹

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LXV.
1810.

¹ Belm. i.
185, 186.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
8, 10.
Nap. iii.
178, 180.
Thib. viii.
259, 260.

Cadiz, the keystone of the strong but disjointed arch of resistance which still encircled Spain, was a city, the natural strength of which had, from the most remote ages, rendered it an important object in the Peninsular wars. The Gaditane Isle, or Isle of Leon, is indeed by nature so strong as to require but little assistance from art to become altogether impregnable. It consists of an island three leagues long, and one and three quarters broad, in the form of an irregular triangle, situated in the sea, at the mouth of the Guadaleta river ; and separated from the adjacent continent by the Santi Petri channel, an arm of the sea nine miles long, about three hundred yards wide, and of depth sufficient to float a seventy-four, which receives the waters of all the streams that descend from the heights on the mainland, and is bounded on the continent by salt marshes of still greater breadth. The great road from Cadiz to Seville crosses this channel and marsh by the bridge of Zuazo, which on the approach of the French was broken down, while the

42.
Description
of the Isle
of Leon.

CHAP.
LXV.

1810.

¹ Tor. iii.
195. Nap.
iii. 173.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
9, 10.

43.
And city of
Cadiz.

² Tor. iii.
195, 197.
Nap. iii.
173, 175.
Hard. xi.
144. Vict.
et Cong.
xx. 10, 11.

approach to it was defended by powerful batteries on either side. The arsenal Caraccas stands on an island at the extremity of the Isle of Leon, nearest to the bridge and mainland, but from the breadth of the marsh it could not be reached save by water or bombardment ; and, on the other side of the bridge, the castle of Santi Petri commanded all the opposite shore and approaches to the marsh. The whole Isle of Leon is composed of a salt marsh, with the exception of the ridge on which the town of Isla, containing eighteen thousand inhabitants, is placed, and the sandhills at the opposite extremity, running out into the sea, on which Cadiz is built, which in general numbers eighty, but was then encumbered by above a hundred and fifty thousand souls.¹

The great road by the bridge of Zuazo, which runs through the town of Isla, is elevated on, and runs for two leagues along, a narrow isthmus, between the Atlantic on the one side and the inner salt marsh of the island on the other ; and it is cut in various places by ditches, and intersected by redoubts which, presenting successive points of defence, rendered attack from without extremely difficult, even if the bridge of Zuazo and town of Isla had been carried. At the close of all, Cadiz itself, situated at the extremity of the isthmus, arises, strongly fortified on that side ; the neck of land which approached it was exposed to the concentric fire of numerous and formidable batteries ; and an advancing enemy would be exposed to a flanking fire from the vessels of war on the one side, and gunboats on the other. Nearly two thousand guns in all were mounted on the immense circuit of the works ; but many of the fortifications were unskilfully constructed, and not less than thirty thousand men were requisite to provide them with proper garrisons. The promontory of the mainland which approaches nearest to the city was armed by two strong forts, called the Trocadero and Matagorda ;² but even if they were carried by the besiegers,

the immense batteries of the Puntales stood directly opposite, on the other side of the channel, at the distance only of twelve hundred yards; while the nearest parts of Cadiz itself were still four thousand yards, or nearly two miles and a half, from the most advanced point to which the besiegers' batteries could be pushed.

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General Stewart arrived at Cadiz, with two thousand British troops, from Gibraltar on the 11th February; and in a few days two thousand more English and Portuguese were received from Lisbon, who were welcomed with loud acclamations by the inhabitants, impending danger having for the time extinguished the hitherto inveterate jealousy entertained by the Spaniards of foreign interference. They found the people zealously engaged in exertions to repair and strengthen the fortifications; and multitudes, in particular, were labouring day and night in cutting a deep ditch across the chaussée on the isthmus leading to Cadiz, in the narrowest part, so as to bring both seas to its foot, and constructing strong walls of masonry and batteries on either side. Their efforts, however, though stimulated by all the ardour of patriotic enthusiasm, were ill directed; confusion and dilapidation pervaded every part of the public administration; and such was the ignorance of the Spanish engineers of the plainest principles of the military art, that, while they had abandoned the strongholds of the Trocadero and Matagorda, from whence the enemy's shells could reach the city, they had pushed their advanced posts on the road to Seville, a mile and a half beyond the Zuazo bridge; that is, into a situation where they were exposed to attack on either flank, and where defeat would endanger the bridge itself, and the whole exterior defences of the Isle of Leon.¹

44.
Arrival of
the British
troops, and
first mea-
sures of
defence.

¹ Tor. iii.
196, 197.
Nap. 177,
179. Thib.
viii. 262,
263.

The first care of General Stewart after his arrival was to regain Fort Matagorda, where batteries were already constructing to bombard Cadiz. This important service

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45.

Noble defence of
Matagorda
by the British.
Feb. 22.

was successfully performed by Captain M'Laine,* at the head of a hundred and fifty seamen and marines. Its dismantled works were hastily restored, and guns planted on the ramparts, which not only silenced the field-pieces of the enemy directed against them, but severely galled their advancing works on the Trocadero Point. The whole efforts of the French were therefore directed to regain possession of this fort on the mainland ; and with such vigour were their operations conducted, and such resources for a siege did they find in the arsenal of Seville, that in a few weeks they had fifty pieces of heavy cannon placed in battery against its walls ; while a Spanish seventy-four and armed flotilla, which had hitherto co-operated in the defence, were obliged, by a tempest of red-hot shot, to slip their cables and move across to Cadiz. The feeble rampart soon gave way before this tremendous weight of metal ; the walls were ruined, and the enemy's balls flew so thick that a flag-staff bearing the Spanish colours was broken six times in an hour, and at last they could only be kept flying by being nailed to the corner of the rampart. Yet the heroic little garrison, with their dauntless commander, Captain M'Laine, still maintained their ground, and from the midst of the ruins kept up an unquenchable fire on the besiegers. For six-and-thirty hours this marvellous resistance was prolonged, till at length General Graham, who had succeeded to the command of the British troops in the Isle, finding that half of the band were killed or wounded, withdrew them in boats to the opposite side : and the bastions, after being blown up, were abandoned to the enemy.^{1†}

The brave resistance of this little band of heroes

* Now Colonel Sir Archibald M'Laine, of the family of the M'Laines of Lochbuy.

† A memorable instance of female heroism occurred at this siege. A sergeant's wife, named Reston, was in a casemate with the wounded men, when a drummer-boy was ordered to fetch water from the well of the fort. On going out the boy faltered under the severity of the fire, upon which she

¹ Nap. iii.
180, 181.
Thib. viii.
264.

proved the salvation of Cadiz, and eventually exercised a material influence on that of the civilised world. For fifty-five days they had held the post on the enemy's side, and in the midst of his batteries; and, by simply maintaining it, they had prevented any attack being made in other quarters. During this important interval the panic had subsided in Cadiz; the British troops had been augmented to eight thousand men by reinforcements from Lisbon and Gibraltar; six millions of dollars, recently arrived from Mexico, had replenished the public treasury; heavy taxes on houses within, and imports into Cadiz, furnished a small permanent revenue; the Spanish garrison was considerably augmented by volunteer battalions raised in the city, and numerous detachments brought by sea from different points on the coast; the whole ships of war had been brought round from Ferrol; and thirty thousand men in arms within the walls, supported by a fleet of twenty-three ships of the line, of which four were British, and twelve frigates, were in a condition not only to defy any attack, but to menace the enemy in the lines which they were constructing round the bay. Victor, who was at the head of the blockading force, had not above twenty thousand men under his command; so widely had the vast French force which burst into Andalusia been dispersed to compel obedience and levy contributions over its extensive territory. Despairing, therefore, of carrying the place by open force, he resolved to turn the siege into a blockade; and, for this purpose, vast intrenchments were constructed round the bay, at the distance of a league and a half beyond the exterior defences of the Isle of Leon, on which the French army laboured for two years,¹ and which, equally with those

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46.

Increased
means of
defence ac-
cumulated
in Cadiz.

¹ Jom. iii.
419. Tor.
iii. 199, 201.
Thib. viii.
265. Nap.
iii. 182, 183.

took the vessel from him; and although a shot cut the bucket cord when in her hand, she braved the terrible cannonade, and brought the water in safety to the wounded men. This heroine still lives, and is at present a matron in the town-hospital of Glasgow.—NAPIER, iii. 181; and *Sketch of a Soldier's Life in Ireland*, 72.

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defences themselves, remain a monument for the admiration of future ages.

1810.

47.

Description
of the
French
lines round
Cadiz.

These gigantic lines of circumvallation, setting out from Rota, a village on the coast, on the north of the bay of Cadiz, passed through the towns of St-Maria and Puerto Real on the sea-shore, ascended the semicircular range of hills which forms the eastern boundary of the great salt marsh, and, after passing through Chiclana, regained the sea at the tower of Bermeja, three leagues to the south of Cadiz. Thus they formed an immense semicircle ten leagues in length, resting at each extremity on the sea, and embracing within its ample circuit the Isle of Leon, lying in the centre of the bay, and separated at every point from the besiegers there by an intervening arm of the ocean and vast salt marsh, in general a league across. On these works, upwards of three hundred pieces of cannon, drawn from the arsenal of Seville, were, before the end of the year 1810, planted by the French engineers; the forts of Matagorda and Trocadero, the advanced posts of their lines, were greatly strengthened, and armed with powerful batteries; while mortars of a prodigious size were cast at Toulon, and sent by sea, by Malaga, to Cadiz, in order to annoy the shipping in the bay or the city. Other advantages, however, accrued to the French from this position: fifteen hundred prisoners, on board two hulks at Cadiz, who had been detained there since the battle of Baylen, cut their cables, drifted during a heavy gale to the French side of the bay, and rejoined their comrades, notwithstanding all the fire of the Spanish batteries, after a deplorable captivity of two years. At the same time, General Lacy, who had advanced with three thousand men to aid the peasants of the Sierra de Ronda, who had taken up arms to resist the French spoliating columns, was, after some successes, surrounded by their forces in every direction, cut off from Gibraltar, and compelled, after sustaining severe loss, to re-embark at Estipona for Cadiz.¹

May 1810.

June 18.
1 Nap. iii.
182, 184.
Thib. viii.
264, 265.
Jom. iii.
419, 421.
Tor. iii.
301, 302.

But it was soon found that the damage which could be effected in this way was very inconsiderable; and although Soult was indefatigable in his efforts, it was very apparent that he had slight hope of reducing the place by force of arms. In truth, under the pretext of maintaining the blockade of the fortress, his real object was to construct a barrier which might prevent the garrison from issuing forth, and the English from rekindling, from that base, the flames of war in the Andalusian provinces. Victor, accordingly, was left in the works with a force never exceeding twenty thousand men, wholly inadequate to undertake active operations against the Isle of Leon, and barely sufficient to guard the immense circuit of the lines; Soult and Sebastiani established themselves with powerful garrisons at Seville and Granada, where they strove, by a profuse expenditure and sumptuous entertainments, to render the French sway popular in the provinces of which these cities were the capitals; Mortier lay in the neighbourhood of the Sierra Morena, and observed the great road to Badajoz; while detached columns traversed the country in all directions, repressing the guerillas, levying contributions to defray the heavy expenses of the generals, and seizing, in defiance of all the usages of civilised war, the paintings which now form the unrivalled collection of the works of the Spanish masters in Marshal Soult's hotel at Paris.¹

Though the forces at the disposal of the French generals were altogether irresistible in the field, and gave them the entire command of the open country, yet the Spaniards in the mountains were still unsubdued; Romana and Ballasteros in the Sierra Morena, to the south of Estremadura; Blake and Elio on the confines of Murcia; and numerous bodies of armed peasants in the mountains of Ronda, still maintained a desultory resistance, cut off the French detachments when they ventured too near their fastnesses, and preserved afloat the standard of independence, until happier days should dawn upon their country. To such a degree were the French irri-

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48.

Positions of
the French
armies in
Andalusia
and Gran-
ada.

¹ Tor. iii.
236. Nap.
iii. 188,
192. Thib.
viii. 266.
Jom. iii.
421.

49.

Desultory
warfare still
kept up in
the moun-
tains of Au-
dalusia.

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1810.
May 9.

tated and annoyed by this harassing warfare, that Soult, on the 9th May, issued a proclamation, declaring the army of King Joseph the only regular Spanish force, and designating the whole patriot bands as armed banditti, to whom no quarter should be given. This enactment was carried into effect by the burning of several villages, and execution of their inhabitants, who had taken part in the insurrection. The regency for some time made no reprisals; but the exterminating system being continued, they at length issued a decree, declaring that for every Spaniard thus murdered three Frenchmen should be put to death; and this resolution having in some instances been acted upon, a stop was at length put, at least in the south, to this inhuman species of hostility.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
421, 422.
Tor. iii.
236, 246.
Nap. iii.
139, 196.
Thib. viii.
266, 267.

50.
Operations
in Catalonia.
Prepara-
tions for the
siege of
Tortosa.

While a noble constancy amidst misfortunes was thus exhibited within the ramparts of Cadiz, and the standard of independence floated only in the south of the Peninsula in inaccessible deserts, or on the summit of the mountains, Suchet was commencing that energetic and skilful campaign which proved so fatal to the Spaniards on the east of Spain. It has been already noticed with what ability he had effected the reduction of Lerida and Mequinenza, and how much his successes were paralysed by the disasters of Augereau, in the northern parts of the province.² Napoleon was so highly gratified by these successes, and mortified by the simultaneous reverses of his other general, that he resolved to intrust his successful lieutenant with the important mission of completing the reduction of the province, and to deprive the unsuccessful one of his command. Augereau accordingly was recalled, and Macdonald, raised to favour by his glorious exploit at the battle of Wagram,³ was appointed to the direction of the northern parts of the province. Two great roads only existed at that period in Catalonia, the one from Barcelona to Saragossa, the other by the sea-coast from Perpignan, by Gerona, Barcelona, Tarragona, Tortosa, and Peniscola, to Valencia. Of the first road the French, since the fall of

² *Ante*, ch.
lxiii. §§ 50,
51.

³ *Ante*, ch.
lxiii. § 54.

Lerida, were entirely masters ; but the second was in their power only as far as Barcelona. Napoleon directed his lieutenants to proceed immediately to the reduction of the remaining strongholds on this line, the success of which would at once give him the command of the great communication along the east coast of Spain, and deprive the enemy of the succours which they were constantly deriving from the English vessels. Macdonald was to command the covering force, while to Suchet was given the immediate direction of the attacking army.¹

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¹ Jom. iii.
444, 445.
Nap. iv. 7,
9. Tor. iii.
312, 315.

But although active operations were thus resolved on in the eastern provinces, and the two French marshals, after leaving a sufficient number in garrison, could bring nearly sixty thousand excellent troops into the field, yet it was no easy task which awaited them in executing the commands of the Emperor. The Spaniards in Catalonia, under O'Donnell and Campoverde, were above twenty thousand strong ; and this force was capable of being increased to double the amount for a particular enterprise, by the concourse of the peasants, all of whom were armed, and to whom dire necessity had taught the art of quitting their houses, and taking refuge in the hills on the approach of the enemy. The upper valleys in Aragon and Catalonia were entirely in the hands of the patriots ; and, descending from their mountain fastnesses, where, from the absence of roads, pursuit was hardly practicable, they alike straitened Suchet's quarters in the former province, and threatened Macdonald's communication with Barcelona in the latter. Though the road from Gerona to that city was only forty miles long, it was highly dangerous from the number of narrow defiles with which it abounded, and the many rivers it had to cross ; and so formidable were the armed bands who hung upon its flank, that the re-victualling of the fortress, which was kept in a constant state of blockade by the patriots, required a covering force of eight or ten thousand men. To add to the difficulties of the French generals, the battering train for

51.
Forces and
dispositions
of the Spa-
niards in
Catalonia.

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¹ Tor. iii.
312, 313.
Nap. iv. 10,
12. Suchet,
i. 173, 176.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
53, 54.

the reduction of Tarragona was preparing at Toulon, and required to come from France. Its transport by sea was impossible, from the vigilance of the British cruisers; and conveyance by land along the sea-coast was both difficult and dangerous, from the vicinity of so many valleys issuing upon it, swarming with armed men. Even if these were successfully passed, the ridge of mountains which separated the neighbourhood of Barcelona from Tortosa and the valley of the Ebro, was in the hands of the Somatenes, and its principal passes were strongly guarded by detachments of regular troops. At the same time the neighbouring fortress of Tarragona, which the Spaniards had materially strengthened, and from whence ample supplies by sea could be obtained, formed an advantageous base for their defensive operations.¹

52.
Macdonald's
first opera-
tions in Ca-
talonia.
May 15.

When Macdonald succeeded Augereau in the command of the army in northern Catalonia, he found the troops in a state of frightful insubordination, carrying on war in a most inhuman manner, and inflicting on and receiving from the unhappy peasants every species of atrocity—the sad bequests of the cruelty and violence of his predecessor. His first care was, by the establishment of discipline, to endeavour to bring them back to more humane habits, and greater regularity of conduct; but the injuries given and received on each side were too recent, the mutual exasperation too violent, to enable him to restore the contest to the usages of civilised war. It was still a war of extermination, and conducted on both sides with the utmost exasperation. Having in some degree, however, by a wholesome severity, restored the discipline of his own troops, he undertook, in the middle of June, the re-victualling of Barcelona, which was hard pressed for provisions: and though, by the aid of a covering force of ten thousand men, he succeeded in his object, yet such were the delays occasioned to his movements by the incessant attacks of the Somatenes, that his provisions

June 10.

were nearly half exhausted when he reached that city ; and he himself was obliged to return with his empty carts, the very next day, to the neighbourhood of Gerona.

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In July he collected another convoy to relieve the again famishing city : forced the Garriga pass on the 18th, and

July 16.

entered Barcelona that night. Early in August he again set out with a third convoy, which he also delivered in

Aug. 8.

safety in that fortress : and finding that the northern parts of the province were entirely exhausted by these

repeated requisitions, he now moved to the southward, forced the pass of Ordal with sixteen thousand men, and

established himself for a few days at Reuss, in the middle of a little plain near Tarragona, while Campoverde, with

Aug. 16.

the main body of the Spanish forces, withdrew under the cannon of that fortress. Finding, however, that the

resources of Reuss and its vicinity were soon exhausted, and that the Spanish irregulars were drawing round him

in all directions, and straitening his foraging parties, he again broke up ; and, after making a feint towards the

Coll de Balaguer, turned sharp to the right, and, overthrowing all opposition, penetrated through the defile of

Montblanch, and, descending into the plain of Urgel, entered into communication with Suchet, who lay at

Lerida, in that vicinity, busily engaged in preparations for the siege of Tortosa.¹

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xx.
54, 55, and
136. Nap.
iv. 19, 21.
Belm. i. 150.
Such. i. 195,
196. Vacani,
84, 92.

O'Donnell no sooner learned that Macdonald, with a considerable part of his forces, had crossed the mountains,

and taken up his quarters in the neighbourhood of Lerida, than he formed the design of surprising some of the

French troops who were left scattered in the Ampurdan and the northern parts of Catalonia. This bold design

he executed with a vigour, skill, and secrecy, worthy of the highest admiration. Shrouding his plans in pro-

found darkness, he set out with a chosen body of six thousand men, and proceeded by forced marches towards

Upper Catalonia. Leaving Barcelona and Hostalrich to the right, spreading contradictory reports wherever he

53.
Brilliant
success of
O'Donnell
in the north
of Catalonia.

Sept. 6.

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Sept. 14.

went of his destination, proceeding by horse-tracks only through the hills, and swelling his column as he advanced by the numerous bands of armed peasants on his road, he fell with an overwhelming force on Schwartz's brigade, cantoned at La Bisbal, three quarters of a league from Gerona, totally defeated it, and made the whole, twelve hundred strong, prisoners. Actively following up his success, he next surprised and captured the whole French detachments on the coasts towards Palamos : and fifteen hundred prisoners were embarked at that harbour for Tarragona, where they arrived in safety. The success, however, was dearly purchased by a severe wound which the brave O'Donnell received at Bisbal, which obliged him to return with part of his force by sea to Tarragona, where he was received by the population in transports as a deliverer. But he left sufficient forces under Campoverde to sustain the war in the Ampurdan, which soon became so formidable that it induced Napoleon to send strong reinforcements from Perpignan to Gerona, in the end of October, while thirty thousand fresh troops entered Navarre from France at the same period.¹

¹Nap. iv. 21,
24. Belm.
i. 151. Tor.
iii. 391, 392.
Vacani, 96,
99.

54.
Repulse of
Macdonald
at Cardona,
and his re-
treat to
Gerona.

Severely mortified by this disaster, which reflected as much discredit on the vigilance of his own officers as it did lustre on the skill and audacity of the enemy, Macdonald felt the necessity of retracing his steps to northern Catalonia ; and, while marching thither, he sought to take his revenge by an attack on Cardona, where Campoverde had stationed himself with a considerable part of his forces, and where the local junta of upper Catalonia had taken refuge when driven from Solsona, their usual place of assembly. In the attack on the latter town, the magnificent cathedral took fire, and, burning all night, fell with a frightful crash that froze with horror every heart that heard it, while the mountains around were illuminated to their summits by the awful conflagration. Cardona itself stands at the foot of a rugged hill, which is the last of an offshoot from the great mountain range that

divides eastern from western Catalonia, and a strong castle frowned on a mountain above. On the slope between the town and this stronghold the Spanish army was drawn up in an admirable position, and presented so formidable an aspect that Macdonald at first hesitated to attack it; but while he was deliberating, his advanced guard engaged without orders, and he was obliged to bring up his main body to its support. Neither, however, were able to make any impression; the French columns were driven back down the hill in disorder, and after losing some hundred men Macdonald drew off, and resumed his march to Gerona, which he reached in the beginning of November. There, however, he found the country so utterly exhausted as to be incapable of furnishing subsistence for so great a number of troops; and as Barcelona was again reduced to extremity by want of provisions,* he left fourteen thousand men under Baraguay d'Hilliers in the Ampurdan to maintain the communication with France, himself set out with sixteen thousand more, and the convoy collected in Perpignan for its relief, and, after some fighting, succeeded in re-victualling the fortress a fourth time. After which, again moving to the southward, he took a position near Montblanch, rather in the condition of a straitened and defeated than a victorious and relieving force.¹

While Macdonald was thus painfully maintaining his ground in upper Catalonia, without the forty thousand men under his command making any material progress in the subjugation or pacification of the country, Suchet was

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1810.

Oct. 21.

Nov. 27.

¹ Nap. iv.
25, 28.
Tor. iii. 321,
322. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
139, 141.

55.
Suchet's exertions preparatory to the siege of Tortosa.

* Such was the extremity to which Barcelona was reduced at this period by the vigilant blockade kept up by the Catalonians on land, and the English at sea, that Macdonald, on 28th October, wrote to Suchet—"The governor of Barcelona has announced to me the immediate departure of a convoy from Perpignan on 4th November, and urges me in the strongest manner to protect its advance. If that convoy is taken or dispersed, Barcelona will be lost: and it is not doubtful that the enemy will try every method to intercept it. My presence alone can save it; and you will easily understand, that even if the chances of success are equally balanced, we can never permit, without effort to avert it, such a loss, which would be irreparable."—MACDONALD to SUCHET, 28th October 1810; SUCHET's *Mem.*, i. 206.

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busily engaged in preparations for the siege of Tortosa. To effect this, however, was a very tedious and difficult undertaking, for the strength of the enemy's forces in the intervening country rendered the transport of the battering train from Gerona and the French frontier impossible; and it required to be collected in Aragon, and conveyed in boats down the Ebro to the destined points, where the banks were in great part in the enemy's hands. Macdonald's approach to the plain of Urgel rather increased than diminished his difficulties; for the unlooked-for accumulation of force speedily exhausted the resources of the country, without affording any protection from the Somatenes to counterbalance that disadvantage.

Sept. 1810.

The financial difficulties of the French general were much augmented at this period by a peremptory order received from Napoleon to burn the whole English goods found in the province — an order which, however ill-timed and disastrous, he was obliged, after making the most vigorous remonstrances, to carry into complete execution, by publicly committing to the flames the British manufactures found in the province, in the great square of Saragossa. British colonial produce, by great exertions, escaped only by paying a duty of fifty per cent.¹

¹ Nap. iv.
30, 32.
Belm. i.
151. Suchet,
i. 280, 284.

56.
His extraordinary
financial difficulties.

This rigorous measure entirely ruined the merchants of the province; and the only resources which the French general had at his command to meet his enormous expenses, were those which he derived from the plain of Aragon, for great part of its mountain districts was in the hands of the guerillas. Nevertheless, though well aware of these facts, Napoleon, following out his usual system of making war maintain war, had thrown him entirely on the province for the whole expenses of his corps and military operations.* Such was the influence, however, of the

* "The governor of Aragon, Marshal Suchet, is charged with the administration of the police, of public justice, and of the finances. He will nominate to all public employments, and make all the requisite regulations. All the revenues of Aragon, as well ordinary as extraordinary, shall be paid over to the French paymaster, for the payment of the troops, and the charges of their

vigorous government and able administration of Suchet, that under the protection of his power, industry by degrees resumed its exertions, and, though the taxes were extremely severe, comparative contentment prevailed. And so great was the dexterity in extracting the resources from a country which long practice had given to the French generals and authorities, that from the ruined capital and wasted province of Aragon, they contrived to extort no less than eight millions of francs (£320,000) annually, for the pay of the troops alone, besides a much greater sum for their maintenance and operations,* although it had never paid four millions of francs in taxes in all to government, in the most flourishing and pacific days of the Spanish monarchy.¹

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¹ Suchet, i.
280, 286.
306. Nap.
iv. 30, 32.
South. v.
257, 258.
Belm. i.
151.

Although a sort of nominal blockade of Tortosa had been kept up since the middle of August, yet it was not till the beginning of November that the operations before it were seriously prosecuted; the waters of the Ebro being too shallow in the autumnal months, from the drought of summer, to permit the heavy boats laden with the siege equipage to drop down from Saragossa to the lower parts of the river. Meanwhile, the Spanish guerilla parties were indefatigable in their efforts to impede the progress of the navigation; several French parties despatched to clear the banks were surprised and cut to pieces; and, on one occasion, a whole Neapolitan battalion was made prisoners. Early in November, however, the waters had risen sufficiently to enable the flotilla bearing the battering train and other siege apparatus, which had been so long in preparation, to drop down the stream; and though some of the boats were stranded, and severe fighting was

57.
Commence-
ment of the
siege of Tor-
tosa. Nov.
1810.

maintenance. As a consequence of this, from the 1st March 1810, the French Treasury will cease to remit any funds for the service of the troops stationed in the whole extent of that government."—*Decree, 8th Feb. 1810; Moniteur, 9th Feb.*; and SUCHET'S *Mémoires*, i. 365. This decree is a specimen and sample of the whole military government of Napoleon.

* In the six months preceding the siege of Tortosa, Suchet had levied in Aragon 120,000 sheep and 1200 oxen.—SUCHET, i. 313.

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1810.

Nov. 19.

Nov. 26.

necessary to clear the banks of the enemy, yet a sufficient number reached the neighbourhood of Tortosa to enable Suchet to commence the siege. Macdonald, at the same time, approached from the north to aid in the operations; and to facilitate his advance, Suchet attacked the Spanish troops at Falcet, who obstructed the communication between the two armies, and after a short conflict put them to the rout with considerable loss. Meanwhile General Bassecour, who, with the Valencian troops, lay on the right bank of the Ebro, and who took advantage of the absence of the general-in-chief with the main body of the French forces on the left bank, to make an attack on the covering force near Uldecona, was defeated in two engagements, with the loss of three thousand men, and forced to take shelter within the walls of Peniscola. These important successes in a great measure secured the rear of the besieging force, and materially extended the district from which their resources were to be drawn; but such was the perseverance of the Spaniards, and the unconquerable spirit with which hostility sprang up in one place when extinguished in another, that the flotillas on the river were still exposed to attack, and a considerable convoy descending the stream was saved from destruction only by the sacrifice of the covering party, some hundreds strong, ashore. Notwithstanding all their vigilance, however, the French generals were drawing their forces, as well as accumulating their means of prosecuting the siege, around the fortress. Suchet had twenty thousand men encamped under its walls; while Macdonald, as already mentioned, having re-victualled Barcelona, and raised its garrison to six thousand men, and left Baraguay d'Hilliers with fourteen thousand at Gerona, drew near with fifteen thousand excellent troops to cover the siege.¹

¹ Nap. iv.
32, 35.
Suchet, i.
517, 224.
Tor. iii. 323,
327. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
143, 144.
Behn. iii.
415, 419.

58.
Description
of Tortosa.

TORTOSA, situated on the Ebro, about twenty-five miles from its mouth, and in part resting on a ridge of rocky heights, which in that quarter approach close to the river, seems to form the bond of communication between the

mountains of Catalonia and the waters of the river. The town itself is situated on the northern or left bank, and its chief defence consisted in the strong fortifications which crowned the crest of the rugged heights that rise from thence towards the mountains that lie to the northward. The communication with the opposite bank was by a bridge of boats, the southern extremity of which was covered by a regular *tête-de-pont*. The works on the left bank, running up broken ridges and across precipitous ravines, were extremely irregular, and formidable rather from the depth of the precipices and obstacles of the ground, than the strength of the battlements with which these were surmounted. A hornwork, called the Tenasas, perched on a height beyond the northern suburb, and a lunette, bearing the name of Orleans, constructed to cover the point where the Duke of Orleans had carried the place during the war of the Succession, constituted its principal outworks on the left bank of the river. The garrison consisted of eight thousand men; the inhabitants, ten thousand more, of whom two thousand bore arms, were animated by the best spirit; and both from the strength of the place and the importance of its position, commanding the only bridge over the Ebro from Saragossa to the sea, this fortress was justly regarded as the key of all southern Catalonia.¹

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Six thousand of Macdonald's men were placed under the command of Suchet, while he himself with the remainder, ten thousand strong, took his station in the passes of the hills, in such a manner as to interrupt the approach of any Spaniards from Tarragona, where the bulk of their forces was placed. But the defence made by Tortosa was noways commensurate either to its ancient reputation, or to the present efforts which had been made for its reduction. The investment having been completed, the whole enemy's posts were driven in on the 19th December; and on the following night ground was broken before the fortress. With such vigour were the operations of the besiegers conducted, and so negli-

¹ Suchet, i.
225, 227.
Nap. iv. 36,
38. Belm.
iii. 419, 420.

59.
Siege of
Tortosa.

Dec. 19.

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Dec. 26.

gently those of the defence, that in the short space of a week the besiegers were safely lodged in the covered way, and on the following day a sally was repulsed with much slaughter. On the night of the 26th the batteries were armed with forty-five pieces of heavy artillery, from which at daybreak on the following morning, a heavy fire was opened upon the Spanish ramparts. In two days the works were sensibly injured, the bridge to the southern bank of the river was broken, and the *tête-de-pont* on that bank abandoned by the besieged. In the night of the 31st, the besiegers' guns were brought up to the edge of the counterscarp, and the miners had effected a lodgment in the rampart; but the mine was not yet fired, no practicable breach had been effected, and the garrison and armed citizens, still above nine thousand strong, might have prolonged for a considerable time a glorious defence.¹

¹ Tor. iv. 98,
101. Belm.
iii. 434, 440.
Suchet, i.
233, 246.
Nap. iv. 42,
44.

60.
Fall of the
place.
Jan. 2,
1811.

The governor Alacha, however, was a weak man, wholly destitute of the resolution requisite for such a situation; his imagination was haunted by the terrors of a mine exploded, and the enemy rushing in through a defenceless breach; and at seven o'clock in the evening he hoisted the white flag on the bastion chiefly threatened. Meanwhile he had recourse to the usual resource of irresolute men—a council of war; but it, as might have been expected, decided nothing, and left him in greater perplexity than before. The officers, however, of the garrison, indignant at the pusillanimous capitulation which was in contemplation, loudly remonstrated against the proposed surrender, and in fact almost shook off the governor's authority. But in the night, the artillery of the besiegers thundered with powerful effect on the rampart from the opposite side of the ditch; in the morning two practicable breaches were made in it, and an immediate assault was commanded. Upon this three white flags were displayed in different parts of the city; and Suchet, perceiving that the governor's authority was not generally obeyed, rode up to the principal gate, informed the sentinels that

hostilities had ceased, and desired to be instantly conducted to the governor in the citadel. He found him surrounded by his officers, who were vehemently protesting against a capitulation, and contending for a renewal of hostilities. But such was the ascendant speedily obtained by the stern manner and undaunted bearing of the French general, that the governor was overawed; none of his officers would undertake the responsibility, at so awful a moment, of revolting openly against his authority, and the place was surrendered at discretion. The garrison, still seven thousand strong, laid down their arms. There were found in the place one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, thirty thousand bombs and cannon-balls, and one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of powder.¹

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¹ Belm. iii.
441, 443.
Suchet, i.
245, 249.
Nap. iv. 44,
45. Tor. iii.
99, 102.

Suchet took steps, without any delay, to improve to the uttermost the immense advantage thus gained. An expedition was immediately fitted out from the fallen city against Balaguer, a fort commanding the pass over the mountains of the same name between Tortosa and Tarragona; and this important stronghold was carried by escalade. This easy conquest gave him the means of directing his forces, at pleasure, either against the latter of these cities, the seat of government and the great bulwark of the Spaniards in the province, or against the valleys still held by their arms in the north of Catalonia; while the possession of the only bridge over the Lower Ebro entirely severed the patriots in Catalonia from those in Valencia, and laid open the rich plains and hitherto untouched fields of the latter province to the French incursions. At the same time, the fort of La Rapita, on the sea-coast a little to the south of the Ebro, and the mouth of that river itself, fell into the hands of the French; and the Valencians and Catalonians, finding themselves entirely severed from each other, and separately menaced with an attack, gave up all thoughts of combined operations, and severally prepared, to the best of their power, to meet the storm about to fall on their

61.
Important
consequences of the
fall of Tortosa.
Jan. 9.

Jan. 13.

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Jan. 15.

heads. Macdonald, however, in the course of his march from the neighbourhood of Barcelona to Lerida, whither he was directing his course in order to concert measures with Suchet for the investment of Tarragona, had to sustain a rude conflict, in the defile of Valls, with the troops of Sarsfield, while the garrison of Tarragona, under Campoverde, assailed his rear. The latter were defeated and driven back into the place; but the Italian division was so severely handled by the former, as to be at first defeated with severe loss; and it only forced the passage by a sudden onset during the night, when the pass was at last cleared, and Macdonald succeeded in reaching Lerida. Notwithstanding this partial success, the cause of the Peninsula could not have received a severer blow than by the unlooked-for and discreditable fall of the important fortress of Tortosa; and to it may immediately be ascribed the long train of disasters which ensued in the east of Spain, and which, if not counterbalanced by the extraordinary successes simultaneously gained by the English in the west, might have permanently riveted the fetters of French despotism around the neck of the Spanish nation.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
448. Nap.
iv. 45.
Suchet, i.
253, 254.
Tor. iv. 108.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
297, 300.

62.
Prepara-
tions for
the siege of
Tarragona.

After the fall of Tortosa, Suchet was engaged for several months in preparations for the most arduous undertaking which now remained in the Peninsula—the siege of Tarragona, the strongest fortress, except Cadiz, still in the hands of the Spaniards—the seat of government, the arsenal of their power, and in an especial manner valuable from its capacious harbour, which afforded ample means of communicating by sea with the English fleet. The city, however, was so powerful, that great preparations, and no small concentration of force, were required for its reduction. In order to prepare for it, Suchet returned to Saragossa, where he devoted himself for some months to the internal concerns of his province, and the collecting provisions for his army; while General Guilleminot, chief of the staff to Macdonald, joined him in that city to

arrange joint measures for the important enterprise. So inadequate, however, did all the means which they possessed appear, that Guillemillot was despatched to Paris in the name of both generals to solicit succours, and the means of pushing the siege with vigour. But Napoleon, who by this time was actively engaged in preparations for the Russian war, informed them that they must not look to him for assistance, and that they had ample means at their disposal to effect their object. He directed that the army of Aragon should form the besieging, and that of Catalonia the covering force; that the siege equipage and artillery should be drawn from the ramparts of Lerida and Tortosa; and that Suchet's force, which was much weakened by its active operations, should be reinforced by two divisions of the army of Macdonald, numbering seventeen thousand men. Notwithstanding this copious draft, the hero of Wagram had still nearly thirty thousand men under his banners, of whom, however, only one-half could be spared from occupying the Ampurdan, and the arduous duty of keeping open the communication between Barcelona and France.¹

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1811.
March 18.

¹ Jom. iii.
516, 517.
Nap. iii. 46,
51. Suchet,
ii. 308, 313.

The contest in Catalonia during the whole Peninsular contest was of a very peculiar kind, and more nearly resembled the varied adventures and balanced successes of the contests of the League in France, or of the Succession in Spain, than the fierce and irresistible onsets which characterised in other quarters the wars of the French Revolution. Exhaustion and lassitude followed every considerable achievement; and the enemy never appeared so formidable as after reverses that presaged his ruin. This was the natural consequence of the strong country which the Spaniards occupied, of the tenacious spirit by which, like their ancestors in every preceding age, they were animated, and of the parsimonious policy of Napoleon, which denied to his generals in every province all pecuniary assistance, excepting such as they could derive from the province itself. A striking example

62.
Renewed
vigour of the
Catalonians
in the war.

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of this peculiarity in the contest, occurred immediately after the fall of Tortosa. While all Europe imagined that so decisive a blow was to terminate the war in the east of the Peninsula, and that Catalonia and Valencia, now severed from each other, would separately fall an easy prey to the victor, the gallant Spaniards of the former province, nothing daunted, were preparing to wrest its most important fortresses from the enemy; and, though baffled in one of their enterprises, they succeeded in making themselves masters of the key of the eastern Pyrenees.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
517. Nap.
iii. 48, 49.

64.
Attempt to
surprise
Barcelona,
and capture
of Figueras
by the Spaniards.

Barcelona was the first object of their attack. Early in March Campoverde assembled eight thousand men at Molinos del Rey, and seven thousand at Igualada and the neighbouring villages; and having secret intelligence with the inhabitants of Monjuich, the citadel of that fortress, who promised to aid him in the attempt, he deemed himself secure of success. Late on the night of the 29th March, he arrived close to the walls, and a column of grenadiers descended into the ditch. General Maurice Mathieu, the French governor, had, however, accurate intelligence of all that was going forward: the ramparts were lined with armed men; and so terrible a fire was speedily opened on the head of the column, that great numbers fell on the spot, and the remainder who had not crossed the crest of the glacis, finding the design discovered, retired hastily and abandoned the attempt. Far from being discouraged by this failure, a similar enterprise was shortly after undertaken against Figueras, and crowned with complete success. A leader of the Miquelets, named Martinez, having ascertained that the governor of this important fortress kept a very negligent look-out, and that the garrison, not two thousand strong, trusted entirely to the strength of the ramparts for their defence, formed the design, with the aid of some citizens in the town, of surprising the gates. Late on the evening of the 9th April, he descended from the mountains, and, as soon as it was dark, sent his advanced guard under

Rovira, seven hundred strong, close to the ramparts. The citizens inside, with whom the plan was concerted, immediately opened the postern; the Spaniards rushed in and disarmed the guard; and so rapidly did Martinez, with the main body of his forces, follow on their footsteps, that before the astonished Italians could make any preparations for their defence, the gates were all in possession of the enemy, the arsenals taken, and the whole garrison made prisoners. Thirty men only were killed or wounded in this brilliant exploit; the governor and seventeen hundred men were taken; a few hundred made their escape to Gerona, where they arrived in great dismay early in the morning; while the Somatenes of the neighbouring hills, among whom the news spread like wildfire, made the most incredible exertions, before the French could re-invest the place, to throw in supplies of men and provisions.¹

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1811.

April 10.
¹ Tor. iv.
 118, 119.
 Nap. iv. 60,
 62. Vict. et
 Cong. xx.
 304, 308.

This important advantage, which seemed to counter-balance the fall of Tortosa, and, if it had been adequately supported, unquestionably would have done so, excited the most enthusiastic transports throughout all Spain. Crowds of Miquelets, fully equipped and burning with ardour, crowded round the standards of Campoverde and Sarsfield; and from all quarters bands of armed men converged towards Figueras to raise the blockade, reinvictual the fortress, and preserve the eastern key of the Peninsula for the arms of the monarchy. *Te Deum* was sung in all the churches of the Peninsula not under the immediate control of the enemy. The general transports knew no bounds. But while the people were giving themselves up to excusable congratulations on this auspicious event, the French generals were busily engaged in taking measures to render it of no avail to the enemy. Baraguay d'Hilliers immediately drew out all the forces he could collect from Gerona and the neighbouring forts, and closely blockaded the fortress, in the hope of compelling it to surrender, from want of provisions, before any succours could be thrown in by the enemy.² The

65.
 Immense
 joy which
 this success
 excited in
 Spain.

² Tor. iv.
 121, 122.
 Nap. iv. 62,
 63. Vict.
 et Cong. xx.
 308, 312.

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Spaniards, however, on their part were not idle; and Campoverde speedily approached from the side of Taragona, at the head of eight thousand infantry and twelve hundred horse, bringing with them a great convoy of ammunition and provisions.

66.
Unsuccessful attempt of Campoverde to relieve the place.

But all his efforts to relieve the place proved unsuccessful. Early in May he made his appearance before the besiegers' stations; and so completely had the design been concealed from the French generals that, at the point where the heads of his columns appeared, there was only a single battalion ready for action, while the Baron d'Erolles threatened the besiegers on the other side by a sally from the citadel; and if the Spanish commander had instantly commenced the attack, the French historians admit he would easily have accomplished his object. The French general, in this extremity, had recourse to an artifice, and announced to Sarsfield the conclusion of an armistice with a view to a capitulation. He fell into the snare, and consented at the critical moment to a suspension of arms. Meanwhile, urgent messengers were despatched for succour; and, when hostilities were resumed, the period for complete success had passed. As it was, the head of Sarsfield's column, after overthrowing all opposition, penetrated into the town, and fifteen hundred men with some provisions succeeded in reinforcing the garrison. But Baraguay d'Hilliers, alarmed by the fire of musketry, and now aware of the real point of attack, hastened with a choice body of four thousand men to the spot, and assailing the Spaniards in flank, while scattered over several miles of road, and in part involved in the streets of the suburbs, won an easy victory. Eleven hundred men were lost to the Spaniards in this affair, and the remainder were driven to a distance from the beleaguered fortress; and though the French loss was nearly as great, yet they might with reason congratulate themselves on the success of their defence,¹ as the provisions thrown into the place

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xx.
308, 311.
Tor. iv.
121, 123.
Nap. iv.
62, 63.

bore no proportion to the additional mouths introduced. After the defeat of Sarsfield the blockading columns quietly resumed their stations on the hills around its walls.

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Macdonald had been engaged during these operations in northern Catalonia in an enterprise which has afforded ground for the only imputation cast upon him. After the departure of Suchet for Saragossa, consequent on the fall of Tortosa, the marshal had set out from Lerida for Barcelona, not by the direct road of Igualada, which was occupied in force by Sarsfield, but by the circuitous route of Manresa. Sarsfield, apprised of his intentions, lay in the rocky heights in the neighbourhood of Montserrat, to assail him in the march. The Italians, who formed the head of the column, encountered a severe opposition at the bridge of Manresa, which was strongly barricaded; but, having forced their way through, they with wanton barbarity set fire to the town, though it had made no resistance, and was almost entirely deserted by its inhabitants, and even tore the wounded Spaniards from the hospital. The flames, spreading with frightful rapidity, soon reduced seven hundred houses to ashes, among which were two orphan hospitals, and several other noble establishments both of industry and beneficence. Macdonald, who witnessed the conflagration from the heights of Culla, at a short distance, was so situated as to be unable to render any effectual aid in extinguishing the flames; and the smoking ruins remained to attest where a French marshal's army had passed the night.¹

67.
Burning
of Manresa.
March 29.

¹ Nap. iv.
56, 57.
South. v.
260. Tor.
iv. 115, 116.
Viet. et
Conq. xx.
304, 307.

But the wanton act of barbarity on the part of Macdonald's men was quickly and condignly avenged. The inhabitants of all the neighbouring hills, struck by the prodigious light which, through the whole night, illuminated the heavens, hastened at daybreak to the scene of devastation, and, wrought up to the highest pitch by the sight of the burning dwellings, fell with irresistible

68.
Successful
attack made
by Sarsfield
on the
French
rearguard.

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1811.

fury on the French rearguard as it was defiling out of the town; while Sarsfield himself assailed the long column of march in flank, when scattered over several leagues of woody and rocky defiles, and before Macdonald reached Barcelona he had sustained a loss of a thousand men. The unnecessary cruelty of this conflagration excited the utmost indignation, not only in Catalonia, but throughout the whole of Spain. The war assumed a character of vengeful atrocity hitherto unknown; and the Spanish generals, justly indignant at such a wanton violation alike of the usages of war and the convention till now observed in Catalonia, issued a proclamation directing no quarter to be given to the French troops in the neighbourhood of any town which should be delivered over to the flames.^{1*}

¹ Tor. iv.
115, 116.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
304, 307.
Nap. iv. 56,
57, South.
v. 260, 261.

69.
Suchet's
reasons for
persisting in
the siege of
Tarragona.

Macdonald was so disconcerted by this disaster, and the fall of Figueras, which in the highest degree excited the displeasure of the Emperor, that he earnestly entreated Suchet to lay aside for the present all thoughts of the siege of Tarragona, and unite all his disposable forces with those of the army of northern Catalonia, for the purpose of regaining the most important fortress in eastern Spain for the French arms. But that general, who was intent on the reduction of the great stronghold of the patriots in that quarter, was not to be diverted from his object; and since Macdonald professed his inability to render him any assistance, he resolved to undertake the enterprise alone, with the aid only of the

* "The conduct of Marshal Macdonald has been equally unworthy of his rank as a French duke and marshal, and his station as a general of civilised armies. Not content with reducing to ashes a defenceless city, which was making no resistance, he has not even respected the asylum of wounded soldiers, and has violated the sacred contract concluded between the hostile armies, and acted upon since the commencement of the war."—CAMPOVERDE'S *Proclamation*, 5th April 1811; TORENO, iv. p. 116. The author, however, is satisfied from documents placed in his hands by Marshal Macdonald's family, since the first edition of this work was published, that that able officer had not the means of stopping the fire; and that, however deplorable the calamity, it was one of the casualties of war, which did not detract from the well-earned fame of that noble warrior.

latter marshal's two divisions which were placed under his orders. He replied, therefore, to the requisition of his colleague for aid in the siege of Figueras, "That a simple blockade might be established by the nearest troops; while to accumulate great forces on so sterile a spot would, without accelerating the surrender, transfer the difficulties of finding subsistence to the besieging force; that it was by no means reasonable to renounce the attack on Tarragona, the only remaining bulwark of Catalonia, at the very moment of execution, because of the loss of a fort; that it was in Tarragona that the greatest number of the Spanish forces in the province were shut up, and it was there only that they could be made prisoners. Eighteen thousand had already been captured in Lerida, Mequinenza, and Tortosa, and if ten or twelve thousand more were taken in Tarragona, the strength of Catalonia would be entirely broken. It was more than ever expedient to press this great operation, as that fortress, stripped of a large portion of its defenders, who had been sent to the relief of Figueras, would fall more easily than could be expected under any other circumstances."¹

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1811.

April 26.

¹ Suchet,
Mem. ii. 16,
17. Nap. iv.
63, 64. Tor.
iv. 122, 123.

TARRAGONA, which Suchet, in obedience not less to the express injunctions of the Emperor, than the dictates of sound policy on the subject, was now seriously resolved to besiege, is a city of great antiquity, and has been celebrated from the earliest times in the wars of the Peninsula. The Tarraco of the ancients, it was the capital in the time of the Romans of Cisterior Spain; though sunk from its pristine magnificence, it still retained many remains of former splendour; and great part of the rampart which still encircled its edifices, had been erected by the hands of the legions. The town consists of a rectangular parallelogram, the northern part of which is perched on a rocky eminence, of which the eastern base is washed by the waves of the Mediterranean. The lower town is situated at the south-west of the rectangle, on the

70.
Description
of Tarragona.

Atlas,
Plate 66.

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banks of the Francoli, which glides in a gentle current into the sea ; and the whole inhabitants did not at the time of which we speak, exceed eleven thousand souls, though nearly an equal number of armed men had, ever since the commencement of the war, been there assembled around the ruling junta of Catalonia. The garrison, however, as Suchet had foreseen, had been so much reduced by the large expedition fitted out under Campo-verde for the relief of Figueras, that, when the French appeared before the place in the beginning of May, it did not consist of more than six thousand men, including twelve hundred armed inhabitants, and the seamen of the port.¹

¹ Nap. iv.
70, 71. Tor.
iv. 125, 126.
Suchet, ii.
35, 36.

71.
Its fortifica-
tions and
means of
defence.

The principal defence of the place on the north-east, where the great road to Barcelona entered its walls, consisted in a line of redoubts connected by a curtain, with a ditch and covered way, running from the sea to the rocks on which the upper town is built ; and behind this exterior line there was a rocky space called the Milagro, lying between the castellated cliffs of the upper town and the sea. The approach to the city on the south-east, where the Francoli flowed in a sluggish current into the sea, is perfectly flat ; and as that side appeared least protected by nature, a newly constructed line of fortifications had been erected both towards the sea and the river ; in the interior of which a fort, termed the Fort Royal, formed a sort of citadel to the lower town. The upper town, which both by nature and art was much the strongest part of the fortress, was separated by a complete rampart from the lower, and communicated, by an old aqueduct which brought water to the city, with Fort Olivo, a large outwork eight hundred yards distant, built on a rocky eminence from which the place might have been commanded. The place was, generally speaking, strong, chiefly from the rugged and inaccessible nature of the cliffs on which the greater part of its ramparts were built ; but it had several weak

points, especially on the southern side. The ample circuit of its walls required more than double the garrison within them to provide a proper defence; and though the English squadron of three sail of the line, under Commodore Codrington, in the bay, had a most imposing appearance, and might aid considerably in the defence, yet it could not be concealed that it could give but little support to the breaches, and that, if the lower town were carried, the upper, thereby cut off from all communication with the harbour and the sea, would soon be forced to surrender.¹

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¹ Suchet, ii.
35, 36, Nap.
iv. 70, 71.
Tor. iv. 125,
126.

Being aware what a desperate resistance he would encounter in assailing this important fortress, the last link which enabled the Catalonians to communicate with Cadiz, Valencia, and the rest of Spain, as well as with the British fleet, Suchet had taken extraordinary precautions for the success of the siege. Immense convoys had been collected in Aragon, which still retained its character of the granary of the army; the flourishing town of Reuss in the vicinity had been fortified, and contained his principal magazines; armed posts along the road in his rear, toward Saragossa, afforded points of protection for his supplies; and a considerable part of his army was scattered over their line of march, to repel the incursions of the Somatenes from the neighbouring hills. All things having, by great and long-continued exertions, been at last got in readiness, the French army moved forward, and, approaching the fortress from the south, crossed the stream of the Francoli, and completed the investment on that side from the foot of the cliffs of Olivo to the sea. In doing so, however, they were exposed to a severe fire from the fort on the one side, and the English squadron on the other, by which in a short time two hundred men were struck down. But notwithstanding this loss, they succeeded in maintaining their ground, and next day repulsed a sortie by the garrison to drive them from it. The French had for the undertaking twenty thousand

72.
Commence-
ment of the
siege.

May 4.

May 5.

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1811.

May 10.

¹ Beln. iii.
479, 483.
Tor. iv. 127,
128. Suchet,
ii. 36, 45.

men, comprising the very best troops in the Peninsula, and a hundred pieces of cannon; but the Spanish garrison was receiving continual reinforcements by sea. Campoverde himself arrived with four thousand men on the 10th, and, after reinforcing the garrison, again set sail to join his lieutenants in the attempt to raise the siege. Colonel Green soon afterwards made his appearance from Cadiz with considerable English stores, and fifty thousand dollars in money; while Sarsfield and d'Erolles resumed their former stations near Valls, Montblanch, and Igualada, to threaten the communications of the besieging force.¹

73.
Prepara-
tions for
storming
Fort Olivo.

May 18 to
22.

The attack of the besiegers being directed, in the first instance, against the southern front of the lower town, near the Francoli stream, they found themselves severely galled by the fire of Fort Olivo; and, on that account, soon felt the necessity of directing their operations, in the first place, against that formidable outwork. Several sallies by the besieged, in some of which nearly six thousand men were engaged, and which, though repulsed, seriously impeded his operations, convinced Suchet, at the same time, of the necessity of contracting his communications, and accumulating all the disposable forces he could command round the fortress, which was now defended by above twelve thousand soldiers. The fortified station on Montblanch, accordingly, was abandoned, and its garrison drawn in to reinforce the besiegers, the line of communication by Falset and Felipe de Balaguer being alone preserved open. Ground was broken before Fort Olivo on the 21st; but the vigorous fire of the Spanish batteries, and the extraordinary hardness of the soil, rendered the progress of the trenches extremely slow; and it was not till the 27th that thirteen guns were pushed so near as to be able to breach the place, and the 28th before the fire was opened. Notwithstanding the weight of metal with which it was attacked, the gunners of the fort replied with uncommon vigour, and little

May 21.

progress was made during the next day in breaching the ramparts; but, towards night, the engineers succeeded in blowing down the palisades which defended the junction of the aqueduct and wall, and left an entrance almost on a level with the ramparts. The breach was not yet practicable; but this ill-defended point afforded a hope of effecting an entrance, and the circumstances of the besiegers, and the increasing numbers and audacity of the Somatenes in their rear, as well as the general enthusiasm excited by the fall of Figueras, rendered it indispensable to hazard an immediate assault. It was therefore ordered for that very night: two chosen columns were selected for the attack: every man in the army, as well as the town, felt that on its success the fate of the siege, and probably of the war in Catalonia, would depend.¹

CHAP.
LXV.
1811.
May 28.

¹ Belm. iii.
494, and
497. Nap.
iv. 76, 77.
Tor. iv. 129,
130. Suchet,
ii. 52, 55.

Four guns were discharged at nightfall as the signal for the assault; a variety of false attacks were immediately directed, with loud cheers and beating of drums, against the ramparts of the fortress, and the columns destined for the real assault of the breach and the aqueduct-entrance of the fort, swiftly and silently advanced to their appointed posts. The Spaniards, distracted by the fire and rolling of drums in every direction, and unable from the darkness to see the assailants, opened a fire from every rampart and bastion in the place: the vast circumference of Tarragona presented an undulating sheet of flame: every cliff, every salient angle, stood forth in bright illumination amidst the general gloom; while the English ships in the bay commenced a distant cannonade, which increased the grandeur of the spectacle, and threw flaming projectiles that streaked the firmament in every direction with flitting gleams of light. Amidst this awful scene the assaulting columns, shrouded in gloom, advanced bravely to the attack. That destined for the storming of the breach stumbled in the dark against a Spanish column, which was proceeding from the town to relieve the garrison of the fort; the two bodies, from the violence of

74.
It is carried
by storm.
May 29.

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the shock, soon were intermingled ; and, in the confusion which ensued, some of the assailants got in at the gate opened to receive the succour ; and, when it was closed, their comrades outside, now close to the walls, began to mount them by escalade. Meanwhile the other column was still more fortunate. The front ranks, indeed, who had descended into the fosse, found their scaling-ladders too short, and were soon swept away by the murderous fire from the rampart ; but the aqueduct presented a bridge, narrow indeed, yet capable of being passed by resolute men, now that the palisades were blown down, and over this narrow ledge the Italian grenadiers made their way into the fort. Though the defences, however, were now penetrated in two different quarters, the brave garrison disdained to surrender. Facing their enemies on the ramparts wherever they presented themselves, they still fought like lions : the cannoneers fell at their guns : the infantry perished in their ranks as they stood : and it was only by pouring in columns of fresh troops, who, as day dawned, mowed the heroic defenders down by concentric volleys on all sides, that the resistance was at length overcome. Two hundred of the assailants perished in this desperate assault ; but the loss of the besieged was still greater, and nearly a thousand men were made prisoners, the remainder of the garrison having in desperation leaped from the ramparts and escaped into the city.¹

¹ Vacani, 124, 126.
Belm. iii. 497, 502.
Suchet, ii. 56, 60. Tor. iv. 131, 132.
Nap. iv. 78, 81.

75.
Preparations of the Spaniards for a protracted defence.
May 31.

The loss of Fort Olivo was a severe discouragement to the Spaniards, as it had been generally considered impregnable, and contained ammunition and provisions for a long siege. Its fall was poorly compensated on the following day by the arrival of reinforcements to the amount of two thousand men, who came by sea from Minorca and Valencia. With their aid a sortie was attempted by three thousand men, to endeavour to regain the fort before the French had time to establish themselves in their conquest ; but so rapid had been the

dispositions of General Rogniat, who commanded the engineers, for its defence, that it was repulsed with loss. A council of war was upon this held in Tarragona, and it was decided that Campoverde should leave the place, and endeavour to rouse the mountaineers of Catalonia, who already mustered ten thousand strong in the neighbourhood of Valls, to raise the siege; while the command of the garrison was committed to Don Juan de Contreras, a brave man, who ably and faithfully executed the arduous trust committed to his charge. He immediately adopted the most energetic measures for the public defence; levied a heavy tax on the principal merchants, which replenished the military chest; and divided the whole inhabitants, without exception of age or sex, into companies, to whom various duties, according to their capacity, were assigned. The aged and the women were appointed to attend the wounded and prepare bandages, the children to carry water and ammunition to the troops, the men capable of supporting arms to reinforce the soldiers on the ramparts; while Commodore Codrington* materially aided the defence by continually landing fresh supplies of provisions and warlike stores, and removing the sick and wounded to the neighbouring and friendly harbour of Valencia.¹

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¹ Suchet, ii.
61, 63.
Belm. iii.
506, 507.
Tor. iv. 133,
134. Nap.
iv. 79, 80.

Finding the garrison resolute in maintaining the defence, notwithstanding the disaster they had experienced, Suchet commenced his approaches in form against the lower town, on the side of the Francoli river. Sarsfield at the same time entered the fortress with reinforcements, and took the command in the menaced quarter. The French engineers, by great exertion, had there established fifty pieces of heavy cannon in the trenches, which were gradually pushed forward to breaching distance, notwithstanding repeated sallies of the besieged. On the 7th June the fire commenced against Fort Francoli, and on

76.
Progress of
the siege,
and prepara-
tions by
the Spaniards
to raise
it.

June 7.

* Now Admiral Sir Charles Codrington, who gained the victory of Navarino.

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June 15.

June 20.

the same night a lodgment was effected in that outwork, which forms the south-eastern angle of the fortress, close to the sea. By this means the besiegers gained the important advantage of closing the entrance of the harbour to the British fleet; but Codrington still kept up his communication with the town by means of the point of Milagro, which was beyond the reach of the guns from Francoli; and he soon after landed four thousand men from Valencia at Villa Novo, who made their way across the hills to Campoverde, who was now seriously preparing in their rear to disquiet the besiegers; while d'Erolles, near Falset, attacked and destroyed a valuable convoy on its route to their camp. Meanwhile the garrison of Tarragona were so confident in their means of defence, that they despatched a body of horse out by the road to Barcelona, who broke through the French lines of investment, and succeeded in joining their comrades destined to raise the siege. Several gallant sorties also were made by the Spaniards from the lower town, some of which proved entirely successful, and sensibly retarded the approaches of the French, which were now directed against the Orleans bastion, still on the southern front of that part of the fortress.¹

¹ Belm. iii.
512, 518.
Tor. iv. 135,
137. Nap.
iv. 87, 89.
Suchet, ii.
63, 81.

77.
The approaches
are brought
up to the
lower town.

These untoward events seriously alarmed Suchet for the event of the siege. The garrison of the fortress had now been augmented, by repeated succours by sea, to nearly seventeen thousand men; the losses of the defence were constantly supplied by fresh troops; his own besieging force was hardly of greater amount, when the losses it had sustained, already amounting to two thousand five hundred men, were taken into view; and fourteen thousand irregular troops, under Campoverde, were assembled to threaten his communications and cut off his convoys. An ordinary general, in such circumstances, would have abandoned the undertaking. But Suchet was one of those remarkable characters who find resources in themselves to overcome even the most formidable

obstacles. He saw that the issue of the campaign was entirely centred in Tarragona; that the siege was a combat of life or death to the opposite parties; and he resolved, at all hazards, to persist in the attempt. Abandoning, therefore, all subordinate stations, and summoning to his aid four thousand additional troops from the rear, he concentrated all his efforts upon pushing forward the approaches, and keeping up the spirits of his men. Such, however, was the vigour of the Spanish fire, and the obstacles which they threw in the way by repeated sorties, that from sixty to a hundred men fell every day in the trenches; and it was evident that both the numbers and spirits of the soldiers would sink before so incessant a consumption, if it was of long endurance. At length, on the 21st June, three practicable breaches were declared in the rampart of the lower town, and the troops were directed to make ready for an assault.¹

¹ Suchet, ii.
80, 84.
Belm. iii.
521, 525.
Nap. iv. 88.
Tor. iv. 137,
139.

78.
Assault of
the lower
town.
June 21.

At seven o'clock at night, fifteen hundred chosen men were disposed in three columns, and, on a signal of four bombs discharged at once, advanced in silence, but with a swift and steady step, towards the breaches. The first column, under General Bouvion, rushed on rapidly to the breach of the Orleans bastion, which they were fortunate enough to surmount almost before they were perceived, and before the enemy had time to fire two mines which had been run under the ruined part of the wall. The Spaniards, surprised, were driven back to the gorge of the redoubt, where they stood firm, and arrested the assaulting column: but, fresh troops pouring in, they were at length overcome, and the victors, hotly pursuing their advantage, made themselves masters of the whole works in the south-west angle of the lower town, and arrived at the foot of the rampart of Fort Royal. Meanwhile the second column, whose attack was directed against the breach in the bastion of St Charles, near the sea-coast, met with a severe resistance, and its head was arrested on the breach; but Suchet no sooner perceived this than

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he ordered up a second body, which, pressing on immediately behind the first, fairly pushed it through the perilous pass, and the rampart was won. The whole bastions and walls of the lower town now swarmed with the assailants; the Spaniards, without a leader, were thrown into confusion, and fled, some to the upper town, and some into the houses on the lower, where they were speedily pursued and massacred. The shouts of the victors, the cries of the vanquished, were heard on all sides, the warehouses near the harbour took fire, and soon filled the heavens with a prodigious flame; in the general confusion the vessels in the port cut their cables, and stood out to sea; while the English squadron increased the horrors of the scene by pouring their broadsides indiscriminately into the quays and ramparts, now crowded with the enemy's soldiers. In the midst of this frightful confusion, however, the assailants steadily pursued their advantage: amidst a terrific carnage, alike of soldiers and citizens, the besieged were driven entirely from their defences; Fort Royal itself was carried by escalade in the first tumult of victory; and when morning dawned the French were masters of the harbour and whole lower town. The principal warehouses were smoking in ruins; fifteen hundred Spaniards lay dead in the streets and on the breaches, while five hundred French had fallen in the assault; eighty heavy guns which stood on the ramparts were in the enemy's power; and the whole remaining hopes of Tarragona centred in the desperate multitude who crowded the walls of the upper town.¹

¹Suchet, 85,
87. Belm.
iii. 529, 531.
Tor. iv. 137.
138. Nap.
iv. 91.

79.
Fruitless
attempt to
raise the
siege, and
arrival of
English
succours.

But that multitude still presented an undaunted front to the enemy, and, amidst the ruin of all their hopes, still hoisted with mournful resolution the standard of independence. A flag of truce, displayed by Suchet the day after the successful assault, was sternly rejected. Loud were the clamours, however, which arose both in the city and the adjoining province, against Campoverde,

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June 24.

June 26.

¹ Suchet, ii.
421. Nap.
iv. 94, 95.
Belm. iii.
531. Tor.
iv. 140.

80.
Failure of
the English
to lend
assistance.

² Tor. iv.
140, 141.
Nap. iv. 94,
95. South.
v. 305, 306.
Contreras.
Report.
Suchet, ii.
421.

for his inactivity in not seriously attempting to raise the siege; and to such a height did the ferment arise after the fall of the lower town, that the junta of Catalonia sent him positive orders at all hazards to attempt it. But though he had twelve thousand infantry and two thousand horse under his command, and the besieged had all their forces ready to co-operate on their side, nothing was done: the officer to whom the principal attack was intrusted was too timid to undertake it; and Campoverde himself, after a vain demonstration, drew off, leaving the garrison to its fate. Still, however, the besieged held out undismayed; and their spirits were elevated again to the highest pitch when, on the 26th, two thousand English from Cadiz, under Colonel Skerret, arrived in the bay. Loud and enthusiastic were the cheers of the excited multitude when the English commander, with his staff, landed and proceeded to the breach. The fall of Fort Olivo, the capture of the lower town, the terrors of Suchet, were forgotten when the scarlet uniforms were seen traversing the streets.¹

But these generous and confiding hopes were miserably disappointed. The British officers, though brave and zealous, had not the true military genius; they did not see where the vital point of the war in the east of Spain was to be found. The engineers reported that the wall, already shaking under the French fire, would soon give way: the Spanish garrison appeared adequate to the defence of the now diminished front, which was alone assailed; and therefore they merely put their troops at the disposal of the Spanish authorities, without insisting that they should share the dangers of the assault. Contreras, who saw that they despaired of the defence of the place, generously refused to require their aid in the town, and acquiesced in their project to co-operate with Campoverde externally in attempting to raise the siege.² This however failed, from the impossibility of getting that general and the governor to agree on any joint plan

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of operations ; and the result was, that the precious hours were lost in useless deliberation. Two thousand British troops, capable of rendering Tarragona as impregnable against the enemy as Acre had proved, and of changing the whole fortune of the war in the east of Spain, remained on board their transports, passive spectators of the last struggles for Catalonian independence.

81.
Prepara-
tions for
storming of
the upper
town.
June 27, 28.

This resolution of the English commanders to keep themselves afloat proved fatal to the besieged city. The withdrawal of the English, at that period universally deemed in the Peninsula invincible, inevitably produced the general impression that the defence could no longer be maintained, and spread distrust and irresolution at the very moment when vigour and enthusiasm were indispensably necessary to avert the crisis. Suchet, meanwhile, was stimulated by the strongest motives to press on and complete his conquest. The town was half taken ; the rampart which separated him from the portion which still remained in the hands of the Spaniards, had no counterscarp or wet ditch ; the harbour was in his hands ; and his breaching batteries, run up to within musket-shot of the walls, had already begun to shake their aged masonry. Contreras, however, though abandoned by the British, was not dismayed. A thick hedge of aloe-trees, no small obstacle to troops, grew at the foot of the rampart ; defences behind the breach were prepared ; the adjoining houses loop-holed as at Saragossa ; barricades were erected across the streets leading into the interior of the town ; the breach itself was occupied by three strong battalions ; reserves immediately behind were ready to support any point which might be menaced ; and eight thousand veteran troops within the walls still promised a desperate resistance. Such was the vigour with which the fire of the place was kept up, that the parapets in the nearest French trenches, erected within the lower town, were shot away ; and the gunners stood exposed beside their pieces to a tremendous storm of musketry from the

rampart, which swept off numbers every minute. The place of those who fell, however, was instantly supplied by others ; the fire of the assailants' batteries continued without intermission ; the breach rapidly widened with every discharge : while the impatience on either side for the final struggle became such, that the soldiers on the walls and in the trenches stood up and hurled defiance with frantic gestures at each other, in the midst of the tempest of shot which was flying on all sides. At length Suchet, at five in the afternoon, deeming the breach sufficiently widened to admit of being carried, traversed the ranks, addressing himself to every company, and, seeing the men wrought up to the highest pitch, gave the signal for assault ; and fifteen hundred chosen troops, sallying forth from the trenches, rushed forward towards the rampart, while eight thousand more were in reserve in the trenches to support their attack.¹

¹ Suchet, ii. 88, 99. Nap. iv. 96, 97. Tor. iv. 142, 143. Belm. iii. 531, 543.

The assailants had to cross a space a hundred and twenty yards broad before reaching the wall : and the row of aloes at its foot offered no inconsiderable obstacle to their advance. When they leapt out of the trenches, the whole French batteries instantly ceased firing ; while the fire of the Spaniards, from the summit of the rampart, redoubled, and a frightful storm of musketry, grape, hand-grenades, and howitzers, swept away the head of the column. On rushed those behind, however, over the dead bodies of their comrades, till the aloes were reached, but their line was found to be impenetrable ; the column required to make a circuit to get round, and the delay and confusion incident to this obstacle had wellnigh proved fatal to the assault. When the troops, disordered and out of breath, at length reached the foot of the rampart, and began to ascend the breach, the crumbling ruins gave way under their feet ; its summit was crowned by a phalanx of determined men, strongly armed with bayonets, swords, and hand-grenades.² A converging fire of musketry fell on all sides, and the leading files were

82.
Its desperate
chances.
June 29.

² Belm. iii. 539, 542. Tor. iv. 143. Nap. iv. 57. Suchet, ii. 93, 100.

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83.
And final
success.

struck down by a shower of grape in flank from the bastion of St John. The column hesitated and recoiled in confusion: already the cries of victory were heard from the rampart, when Suchet, who was at hand to arrest the disorder, pushed forward a strong reserve, and himself followed with his staff to the scene of danger.

Still the assailants hesitated at the foot of the breach, and, spreading out on either side in wild confusion, began from below a useless return to the fire of the enemy, or took shelter under the projections of the bastion of St Paul. Upon this, General Habert, Colonel Pépé, and the whole officers of the staff, themselves rushed forward to the breach, followed by the commanders of companies of the assaulting columns. Many fell in the ascent; but the remainder pushed on with heroic courage, and reached the top; the mass behind re-formed and rapidly followed on their footsteps, and the town was won. Eight thousand French, in the highest state of excitement, speedily streamed over the breach, and spread like a torrent along the ramparts on either side: and in the general confusion the three battalions, placed on and in support of the breach, were overthrown. A panic seized the Spanish troops in the interior; almost all their defences were abandoned; and it was only at the barricades and loop-holed houses near the street of La Rambla, that any serious resistance was experienced. There, however, a handful of desperate men defended themselves like lions, and it was only by continually bringing up fresh columns of attack, and by the failure of ammunition among the besieged, that they were at length overcome, and the town finally taken.^{1*}

¹ Suchet, ii. 93, 106.
Nap. iv. 97.
98. Tor. iv.
143. Belm.
iii. 539,
545.

* To such a height had the spirit of Suchet's troops risen, that an Italian soldier named Bianchini, who, at the assault of Fort Olivo, had pursued the Spanish garrison to the foot of the walls of the town, and made some prisoners there, being brought before the general-in-chief, and asked what recompense he desired, answered—"The honour of mounting first to the assault of Tarragona." On the 28th June, this brave man, now promoted to the rank of a sergeant, presented himself in full uniform before the general, and claimed

The fame justly due to Suchet and his indefatigable army for this glorious exploit, which was one of the greatest blows struck during the whole Peninsular war, and gave a decisive preponderance to the French arms in the east of Spain, was deeply tarnished by the savage cruelty which disgraced their triumph after the city was taken. The heroic governor, Contreras, who had received a deep bayonet-wound in the breast, near the breach, was borne on a board into the presence of the French commander, while the carnage was yet reeking in every quarter. Instead of admiring the valour and commiserating the situation of his fallen enemy, the victorious general reproached him for the tenacity of his defence, and declared he deserved instant death for having continued the resistance after the breach was practicable. "I know of no law," replied Contreras, "which compelled me to capitulate before the assault; besides, I expected succour. My person should be respected like that of the other prisoners, and the French general will respect it; if not, to him the infamy, to me the glory." This dignified answer recalled Suchet to his better feelings: he treated the captive general with respect, and soon after loaded him with kindness, and made advances to induce him to accept rank in the service of Joseph. But the brave Spaniard was proof against his seductions, as he had been against his menaces, and he was in consequence sent as a prisoner to the citadel of Bouillon, in the Low Countries, from whence he afterwards made his escape.¹

But in other quarters the work of slaughter went on without intermission. Gonzalez, the second in command, fell, pierced by more than twenty wounds: nine hundred

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84.

Disgraceful
cruelty of
the French
in the city.

¹ Tor. iv.
144. Such.
ii. 105, 110.
Contreras'
Report, No.
22. Belm.
iii. 544, 546.

the honour which had been promised him. He obtained it; was seen at the head of the forlorn-hope; received a wound, but still pressed on, encouraging his comrades to follow him; was twice again wounded without stopping; and at length fell, pierced to the heart by a musket-ball, near the summit of the breach! The spirit of ancient Rome is not extinct in Italy; it is only obscured by the corruptions which have overspread the higher ranks from long-continued civilisation.—See SUCHET'S *Memoirs*, ii. 100, 101.

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85.

Frightful
massacre in
the town.

wounded, who had sought refuge in the cathedral, and lay on the pavement weltering in blood, were spared; but upon the defenceless inhabitants the storm of the victors' fury fell with unexampled severity. Armed and unarmed, men and women, gray hairs and infant innocence, attractive youth and wrinkled age, were alike butchered by the infuriated troops, whose passions were not, as with the English soldiers, those of plunder or drunkenness, but the infernal spirit of implacable vengeance. Above six thousand human beings, almost all defenceless, were massacred on that dreadful night, which will be remembered in Spain as long as the human race endures.* The greater part of the garrison, which had precipitated themselves over the rocks, or rushed through the northern gates, enclosed between the French lines and the fire of the ramparts, were made prisoners; and when the magistrates of the surrounding country were, on the following morning, by Suchet's orders, brought into the town, and marched through the streets to see what fate awaited those who resisted the French arms, "the blood of the Spaniards," to use the expression of the French journalist of the siege, "*inundated the streets and the houses.*" Humanity, however, amidst such scenes of horror, has to recount with pleasure that many French officers exerted themselves, at the hazard of their own lives, though too often in vain, to stay the carnage; and that numbers of individuals owed their lives to their generous intercession.¹

The trophies of the victory were immense; its results decisive. The French loss had been very severe during

¹ South. v. 307, 309.
Tor. iv. 144, 146. Suchet, ii. 105, 114. Belm. iii. 544, 547. Contreras' Report, No. 22. Suchet, ii. 423, 424.

"Ogni cosa di strage era già pieno,
Vedeansi in mucchi e in monti i corpi avvolti;
Là i feriti sui morti, e qui giaciono
Sotto morti insepolti ogni sepolti.
Fuggian premendo i pargoletti al seno,
Le meste madri co' capelli sciolti;
E'l predador, di spoglie e di rapine
Carco, stringea le vergini nel crine."

the siege, amounting to fully five thousand killed and wounded; but this was much exceeded by that of the besieged. Nine thousand of the garrison were made prisoners; three hundred and twenty guns mounted on the ramparts, fifteen thousand muskets, and above a million of cartridges, fell into the hands of the victors. The total loss to the Spaniards, from the commencement of the operations, had been little short of twenty thousand of their best troops. The French artillery had discharged forty-two thousand projectiles, the Spaniards a hundred and twenty thousand during this siege—in every point of view, one of the most memorable in modern times. But its greatest results were the depriving the patriots of their grand military arsenal, and principal point of communication with the British fleets and the ocean in those parts of Spain. Justly impressed with the magnitude of those advantages, as well as the fortitude and ability displayed in their acquisition, Napoleon sent Suchet his marshal's baton, with an injunction to proceed as he had begun, and earn his dukedom under the walls of Valencia.¹

Anxious to secure, by rapidity of operations, the whole fruits which might be expected from so great a stroke, Marshal Suchet no sooner found himself master of Tarragona, than he marched out with the greater part of his forces against Campoverde, whose troops, divided between consternation at its fall, and indignation at his temporising policy in not relieving it, were alike disheartened and distracted, and incapable of opposing any serious resistance to his arms. But the Spanish general fell back so rapidly into the upper valleys and mountain ridges of Catalonia, that Suchet could not reach him; and various atrocious deeds of cruelty, by which the French marshal endeavoured to strike terror into the Catalans during his march, only revived the exasperation, and sowed again the seeds of an interminable war in the province. Campoverde, however, finding himself in no condition to make head against so formidable an assailant, retired to the

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86.

Immense results of this siege.

¹ Suchet, iii.
121. Belm.
549, 550.
Tor. iv. 147.87.
Suchet's
next operations.
June 29.Atlas,
Plate 48.

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July 5.

July 9.

July 11.

mountain ridges on the frontier of Aragon, and openly announced his intention, which a council of war supported, of abandoning the province altogether as a lost country. Upon this all the soldiers in his army who were not Catalans deserted; numbers of the natives of the province returned in despair to their homes; grief and dejection universally prevailed. Meanwhile fifteen hundred prisoners, chiefly wounded, were captured at Villa Nova when endeavouring to embark: the road to Barcelona was opened: and the Spanish rearguard defeated at Villa Franca. The Valencians, however, so loudly remonstrated against being abandoned to their fate in the Catalonian mountains, the more especially when their own country was evidently threatened, that Campoverde agreed to return to Cervera; and the troops of that province, three thousand in number, made their way to the sea-coast, where they were embarked at Arenis de Mar. The English commodore, however, who took them on board, refused to embark any but Valencians, and thus the bulk of the army was forcibly retained on its own shores. Ultimately Campoverde was deprived of the command, which was conferred on General Lacy; and that indefatigable commander immediately gave a new organisation to his army, suited to the altered circumstances of the province. Dismissing a large proportion of the officers, and almost all the horses, he re-formed great part of the troops into guerilla bands, under whatever chiefs they chose to select, and numbers of them repaired to the standard of MINA, in Navarre, who had now risen to celebrity; and, after undergoing hardships and privations which exceed all portrayed in romance, ultimately joined the victorious host which, under Wellington, righted at the eleventh hour the wrongs of their country.¹

¹ Tor. iv.
148, 150.
Nap. iv.
106, 103.
Belm. iii.
550, 553.

While the elements of resistance to French domination were thus, to all appearance, melting away in Catalonia, Suchet, whose activity neither difficulty could check nor

prosperity diminish, executed a *coup-de-main* against MONTERRAT, a celebrated mountain fastness, and now the last stronghold of independence in that part of Spain.

It was composed of the convent of Our Lady of Montserrat, formerly possessing great riches, which had been removed at an early period of the war to Minorca by the monks; and stood upon the summit of a fantastic mountain, overlooking from the westward the plain of the Llobregat, in the neighbourhood of Barcelona. The prodigious height of the precipices on which the buildings were situated; the wild forms of the peaks which shot up as it were into the sky around them; the naked and savage character of the rocks, like the bones of a gigantic skeleton, of which the whole upper part of the mountain is composed; the numerous hermitages which nestled like swallows' nests in the clefts, or crowned the projecting points in its long ascent; the blue waters of the Mediterranean seen bounding the distant horizon from the higher regions; the smiling aspect of the plain of Barcelona, teeming with riches and glittering with buildings, at its foot, joined to the massy pile, Gothic towers and aerial spires, of the convent itself, at the summit—had long impressed the minds of the Spaniards with religious awe, and rendered this monastic retreat one of the most celebrated in the south of Europe. But war in its most terrible form was now to penetrate these abodes of solitude and meditation; and the clang of musketry and the thunders of artillery were to re-echo amidst wilds hitherto responsive only to the notes of gratitude or the song of praise.¹

The convent of Our Lady, evacuated by the monks, had, from the beginning of the war, been a favourite station of the patriot bands; and though its situation, at the distance of seven leagues only from Barcelona, had long rendered it at once a point of importance to the Spaniards and annoyance to the French, yet, from the apparently impregnable strength of its situation, no

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88.

Description
of Mont-
serrat.

¹ Tor. iv.
151, 152.
Suchet, ii.
122, 123.

89.
Prepara-
tions for
storming
the convent.
July 25.

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attempt had been made to dislodge them from it. Of late considerable pains had been taken to strengthen the position: the steep and narrow paths which wound up the long ascent, had in many places been fortified; batteries had been erected on some commanding points; deep ditches drawn across the road in others; and, near the monastery itself, a strong intrenchment had been thrown up, while its gates were barricaded, and its massy walls loopholed for musketry. The principal approach was on the north side by Casa Mansana, and it was there that the greatest care of the garrison had been bestowed; that which ascended the mountain on the south by Colbato, and on the east towards Monistrol, consisted of mere paths, so steep and rugged that they were deemed altogether inaccessible to a body of troops.

¹ Suchet, ii.
124, 128.
Tor. iv. 150.
Nap. iv.
102, 103.

Suchet, however, having accurately inquired into the nature of the ground, resolved to menace all the three approaches at once; the principal attack, under General Maurice Mathieu, being directed on the northern side.¹

90.
Storming
of the
convent.

This column experienced no serious opposition till it arrived at the chapel of Santa Cecilia; but there a strong intrenchment blockaded the road, while a severe fire of grape and musketry from the overhanging woods and cliffs seemed to render attack impossible. The grenadiers halted, and fell back till they were out of reach of the fire; but, meanwhile, Maurice Mathieu detached some light troops to scale the rocks which arose behind the intrenchments; and these gallant men, after undergoing incredible fatigues, succeeded in establishing themselves on the heights in the rear of the Spanish position, and opened a plunging fire on the gunners at their pieces. Encouraged by this joyful sound, the grenadiers in front returned to the charge, and by a rapid rush succeeded in passing the perilous defile, and carrying the work: a second battery was won in like manner, though the Spaniards stood their ground bravely, and were bayoneted at their guns. When the assailants reached the

summit, and were preparing to assault the monastery, the sound of musketry behind, and a sudden rush of the garrison towards the barriers in front, told them that those intrusted with the attack on the side of Colbato had already succeeded in surmounting all the difficulties of the ascent, and that the last stronghold of the enemy was won. They had got into the enclosures by means of a postern which had been neglected, and made their way by a sudden surprise into the convent. Baron d'Erolles threw himself with the greater part of the garrison down some ravines, known only to the Spanish mountaineers, and reached the Llobregat without any material loss ; but the convent, with ten pieces of cannon and all its stores, was taken, and the reputation of invincibility reft from the last asylum of Catalonian independence. Two of the monks were massacred in the first heat of the victory, but the officers succeeded in rescuing the remainder ; the hermits were left unmolested in their moss-grown cells. This brilliant success, coming so soon after the capture of Tarragona, produced a powerful impression over the whole province ; many guerilla bands laid down their arms ; several towns sent in their submission ; and Suchet, deeming Macdonald in sufficient strength now to complete its pacification, returned to Saragossa to accelerate his preparations for the expedition against Valencia.¹

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¹ Suchet, ii.
124, 131.
Nap. iv. 102,
104. Tor. iv.
150, 151.

No force now remained in Catalonia capable of interfering with the blockade of Figueras, which Napoleon was daily becoming more desirous of regaining for the French empire. Macdonald, on his part, was not less solicitous for its reduction, as well to wipe out the blot which its capture had affixed on his scutcheon, as to propitiate the Emperor, who was much displeased at the repeated checks he had experienced, and was already preparing to give him a successor. Despairing of effecting the reduction of so strong a place, garrisoned by four thousand resolute men, by open force, he preferred the

91.
Blockade
and surren-
der of Fig-
ueras.
Aug. 19.

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surer but more tedious method of blockade ; and for this purpose drew vast lines of circumvallation around the town, resembling rather the imperishable works of the Roman legions, than those constructed during the fierce but brief career of modern warfare. These lines were eight miles long, making a complete circuit of the town, beyond the reach of cannon-shot, and effectually barring all communication between the besieged and the circumjacent country. They were formed everywhere of a ditch, palisades, covered way, and curtain ; were strengthened at equal distances by bastions armed with heavy cannon, and defended by twenty thousand men. Secure behind these inaccessible ramparts, the French troops quietly waited till famine should compel the besieged to surrender. Such was their strength, and the vigilance with which they were guarded, that the sallies of the garrison, and the efforts of the Somatenes in the adjacent hills to throw succours into the fortress, were alike baffled ; and at length, after losing fifteen hundred of their number in these ineffectual sorties, and having exhausted all their means of subsistence, the Spaniards were compelled to surrender at discretion. Thus was accomplished the prophecy of Suchet, that the surprise of Figueras, by inducing the Spaniards to detach a portion of the defenders of Tarragona to its succour, would prove rather prejudicial than auspicious to their arms ; and the wisdom of his military counsel not to endanger success by dividing his means, but, relinquishing all minor objects, to concentrate his whole force upon the principal stronghold of the enemy, and vital point of the campaign.¹

¹ Belm. i.
206, 207.
Tor. iv. 154,
155. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
533, 534.

Having completed his preparations, Marshal Suchet, in obedience to the positive orders of Napoleon, in the beginning of September commenced his march against Valencia, at the head of rather above twenty thousand men ; the remainder of his force, which numbered nearly forty thousand combatants, being absorbed in garrisoning the

92.
Invasion of
Valencia by
Suchet, and
preparations
for its de-
fence by the
Spaniards.
Sept. 15.

numerous fortresses he had captured, and in keeping up his extensive communications. The Spaniards, meanwhile, had not been idle. Aware of the formidable onset which now awaited them, the junta of Valencia had for a considerable period been busily engaged in preparing for defence. The fortifications of Peniscola, Oropesa, and Murviedro or Saguntum, which lay on the great road from Barcelona, had been materially strengthened; the last had a garrison of three thousand men, and was amply provided with the means of defence; Valencia itself was covered by an external line of redoubts and an intrenched camp, which, in addition to its massy though antiquated walls, and ardent population, inflamed by the recollection of two successive defeats of the French, seemed to promise a difficult, perhaps a doubtful contest. Blake, the captain-general of the province, and a member of the council of government, was at the head of the army, which mustered five-and-twenty thousand men, comprising almost all the regular soldiers in the Peninsula. He had it in his power, if overmatched, to fall back on the impregnable walls of Carthagená or Alicante; while the sea in his rear everywhere afforded the inestimable advantage, at once of securing succour from the English in case of resistance, and the means of evasion in the event of a defeat.¹

MURVIEDRO, the ancient SAGUNTUM, is a fortress built upon the summit of a steep and rocky hill, at the bottom of which the modern town of Murviedro stands. The waters of the Mediterranean, in the days of Hannibal, approached to within a mile of its eastern walls;² but at present they are five miles distant—a proof how much the sea has retired along that coast in the intervening ages. Many remains of its former grandeur are still to be found by the curious antiquary, although its greatness has so much declined that the modern city contains but six thousand inhabitants, and occupies only a corner of the ample circuit of the ancient walls. The modern for-

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1811.

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xx.
334, 335.
Jom. iii.
526, 527.
Tor. iv. 208,
211. Suchet,
ii. 43, 151,
155.

93.
Description
of Sagun-
tum.

² Polyb. 1,
iii. c. 2.

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¹ Tor. iv.
209, 210.
Suchet, ii.
154, 159.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
335, 336.

treass, which bears the name of San Fernando de Saguntum, stands on the summit of the mountain round the base of which the ancient city was clustered, and consisted at this time of two redoubts, armed only with seventeen pieces of cannon. The garrison, however, was three thousand strong; the principal defence of the place consisted in its position, perched on the summit of a rock, perpendicular on three sides, and only accessible on the west by a steep and devious ascent; and its importance was great, as commanding the only road from Barcelona or Aragon to Valencia.¹

94.
Siege and
unsuccessful
assault of
Saguntum.
Sept. 28.

The lower town, upon the approach of the French, was abandoned, and occupied by General Habert's division without resistance. Immediately the investment of the fort was completed; and the French engineers, having by means of their telescopes discovered two old breaches in the walls, which were as yet only imperfectly barricaded with wood, though the besieged were endeavouring to erect a curtain of masonry behind them, conceived the design of carrying the place by escalade. The success which had attended a similar *coup-de-main* at Balaguer² seemed to encourage the attempt, and two columns were formed early on the 28th for the assault; but the vigilance of the Spanish governor, Andriani, had penetrated the design; the assailants were received with a close and well-directed fire of grape and musketry, and repulsed with the loss of four hundred men. Warned by this check of the need of circumspection, Suchet now saw the necessity of making approaches in form; but for this purpose it was necessary to reduce the little fort of Oropesa, which commanded in a narrow defile the road by which alone artillery could be brought up from the great arsenal at Tortosa. It was attacked, accordingly, by a Neapolitan division: but, though it was only garrisoned by two hundred men, and armed with four guns, this Lilliputian stronghold held out till the 11th October,³ when it was taken after a practicable breach had been

² *Ante*, ch.
lxv. § 61.

Oct. 11.
Oct. 12.
³ Suchet, ii.
158, 168.
Tor. iv. 212.
214. Belm.
i. 209.

made in the ramparts. At the same time, the garrison of another castle on the sea-coast, near the same pass, resolutely refused to capitulate, even when the wall was ruined, and the enemy were mounting to assault; and succeeded, when the post was no longer tenable, in getting clear off by sea, and with the aid of an English frigate, to Valencia.

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Suchet, meanwhile, marched against and defeated a considerable body of guerillas under Don Carlos O'Donnell, which had assembled in his rear; and the heavy stores and siege equipage having been now brought up from the Ebro, the approaches against Saguntum were carried on with extraordinary vigour. A practicable breach having been made in the walls, a second assault was ordered on the 18th October. Though the guns in the fort were entirely silenced by the superior number and weight of the enemy's cannon, and the rampart had neither wet ditch nor exterior defences, yet the heroism of the garrison supplied all these defects. With indefatigable perseverance they collected sand-bags, with which they stopped up the chasm in the masonry occasioned by the French guns; their muskets returned a gallant though feeble fire to the thunder of the besiegers' artillery; and a band of dauntless men on the summit of the breach braved the French fire, and provoked the imperial grenadiers to come on to the assault. Soon their desire was gratified. A chosen column, eight hundred strong, was let loose from the trenches, and swiftly ascended towards the breach: they succeeded, though with great difficulty, in reaching its middle; but there the fire of musketry, discharged within pistol-shot of their heads, was so severe, and the shower of stones, hand-grenades, and cold-shot from the summit so overwhelming, that after a short and bloody struggle, they were hurled back to the foot of the hill with the loss of half their number, and Saguntum again, after the lapse of two thousand years, repulsed the soldiers of Napoleon, as it had done those of Hannibal.¹*

95.
A second
assault de-
feated.
Oct. 2.

Oct. 18.

¹ Nap. iv.
273, 274.
Tor. iv. 214,
216. Suchet,
ii. 168, 173,
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
136, 138.

* "Pono cepisse jam se urbem, si paululum annitatur, credente; Saguntinis

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96.

Perilous
situation of
Suchet after
this repulse.

Aug. 1811.

Suchet's situation was now again full of peril. The guerilla parties invested the road between Tortosa and Oropesa, so as to render the conveyance of stores and provisions impossible, except by the detachment of a considerable force. Blake, with an army superior to his own, and entirely master of his operations, was in his front: he could not pass Saguntum, already proved by the failure of two assaults to be all but impregnable, and to retreat would be to rouse a flame throughout the whole of the east of Spain, and lose all the fruits of the fall of Tarragona. Nor were the accounts from Catalonia and Aragon calculated to allay his fears as to the issue of the campaign. The long inactivity of the French troops around Figueras had been attended with its usual effects in those warm latitudes. Sickness had spread to a frightful extent during the autumnal months; ten thousand men were in the hospital; and the communication between Gerona and Barcelona was again entirely interrupted. Encouraged by the debility of the enemy's forces in the Ampurdan, and the absence of Suchet from the southern parts of the province, the unconquerable Catalans had again risen in arms. Lacy had succeeded in reorganising eight thousand men under d'Erolles and Sarsfield, who were prosecuting a partisan warfare with indefatigable activity—arms and ammunition having been furnished by the English. Busa, a mountain post of great strength, about twenty miles above Cardona among the Spanish Pyrenees, fixed on as their arsenal and seat of government, was already fortified and guarded by the militia of the country. Lacy was soon in a condition to resume offensive operations; he surprised Igualada, destroyed

pro nudatâ mœnibus patriâ corpora opponentibus, nec ullo pedem referente, ne in relictam a se locum hostem immitteret. Itaque quo acrius et conferti magis utrimque pugnabant, eo plures vulnerabantur; nullo inter arma corporaque vano intercidente telo. Quum diu anceps fuisset certamen, et Saguntinis, quia præter spem resisterent, crevissent animi; Pœnus quia non vicisset pro victo esset; clamorem repente oppidani tollunt, hostemque in ruinas muri expellunt; inde impeditum trepidantemque exturbant; postremo fusum fugatumque in castra redigunt."—LIVY, lib. xxi. cap. 8, 9.

the French garrison, two hundred strong, captured an important convoy, compelled the enemy to evacuate Montserratt and retire to Tarragona, levied contributions up to the gates of Barcelona, and even crossed the frontier, carrying devastation through the valleys on the French side of the Pyrenees. Six hundred men were made prisoners at Cervera, two hundred at Bellpuig. MacDonald was recalled from a command in which he had earned no addition to his laurels; and it was only by collecting a force of fourteen thousand infantry and two thousand horse, that his successor Decaens was enabled to escort a convoy from Gerona to Barcelona.¹

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Sept. 10.
Sept. 12.

Oct. 11.

Oct. 14.
¹ Tor. iv.
224, 230.
Nap. iv.
276, 277.

The intelligence from upper Aragon was not less disquieting. The EMPECINADO, a noted guerilla chief, whose stronghold was the mountains near Guadalaxara, had united with Duran and other guerilla leaders; and their united force, consisting of six thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred horse, besieged Calatayud: MINA, another guerilla partisan, with five thousand men, was threatening Aragon from the side of Navarre; and lesser partisans were starting up in every direction. Musnier's and Severole's division, indeed, numbering twelve thousand soldiers, succeeded in raising the siege of Calatayud; but Mina gained great successes in the western part of the province, pursued the flying enemy up to the gates of Saragossa, and totally destroyed twelve hundred Italians, who were following him in his retreat towards the mountains. Such was the local knowledge and skill of this incomparable partisan, that, though actively pursued by several bodies of the enemy much superior to his own troops, he succeeded in getting clear off with his prisoners, which were taken from his hands on the coast by the Iris frigate, and conveyed safe to Corunna. The road between Tortosa and Oropesa also, Suchet's principal line of communication, was entirely closed by lesser bands:² and it was easy to see, that if he either remained where he was without gaining decisive

97.
Successes of
the guerillas
in Aragon.

Oct. 5.

Oct. 9.

² Suchet, ii.
192, 203.
Tor. iv. 230,
239. Nap.
iv. 278, 280.

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success, or fell back to the Ebro, he would be beset by a host of enemies who would speedily wrest from him all his conquests.

98.
Advance of
Blake to
raise the
siege.

Oct. 24.

From this hazardous situation, the French general was relieved by the imprudent daring of the Spaniards themselves. Blake, who was no stranger to the formation of a breach in the walls of Saguntum, and knew well that, notwithstanding their recent success, the brave garrison would in the end sink under a repetition of such attacks, was resolved that they should not perish under his eyes, as that of Tarragona had done under those of Campoverde. He accordingly made preparations for battle, and for this purpose got together twenty-two thousand infantry, two thousand five hundred horse, and thirty-six guns. With this imposing force, after issuing a simple but touching proclamation to his troops, he set out from Valencia on the evening of the 24th October, and made straight for the French position under the walls of Saguntum. Suchet was overjoyed at the intelligence, which reached him at eleven at night; and immediately gave orders for stopping the enemy on his march, before he had arrived at the ground where he designed to give battle. With this view the French general drew up the whole force that he could spare from the siege, about seventeen thousand men, with thirty guns, in a pass about three miles broad, which extended from the heights of Vall de Jesus and St Espiritus, to the sea; and through which the Spanish army behoved to pass, in approaching Saguntum from Valencia. The gunners were all left in the trenches; and in order to deceive the garrison, and deter them from attempting a sortie, they received orders to redouble their fire upon the breach. But, notwithstanding this, the besieged from their elevated battlements descried the approaching succour, and with intense anxiety watched the progress of the advancing host.¹

¹ Tor. iv.
217, 218.
Nap. iv.
281, 282.
Suchet, ii.
179, 181.

At eight o'clock on the following morning, the Spanish

army commenced the attack upon the French at all points, and soon drove in their light troops. Following up this advantage, they pressed on and won a height on the French right which commanded that part of the field, and established some guns there which did great execution. The whole Spanish left, encouraged by this success, advanced rapidly and with the confidence of triumph; their dense battalions were speedily seen crowning the heights on the French right; and the garrison of Saguntum, who crowded the ramparts, deeming the hour of deliverance at hand, already shouted victory, and threw their caps in the air, regardless of the besiegers' fire, which never for an instant ceased to thunder on their walls. In truth, the crisis was full of danger, and a moment's hesitation on the general's part would have lost the day. But Suchet was equal to the crisis. He instantly ordered up Harispe's division, which, after a severe struggle, regained the heights; and, perceiving that Blake was extending his wings with a view to outflank his opponents, he brought up his second line, leaving the cuirassiers only in reserve, and made a vigorous attack on the Spanish centre. The first onset, however, proved utterly unsuccessful; the Spaniards, driven from the height, rallied behind their second line, and again advanced with the utmost intrepidity to retake it: Caro's dragoons overthrew the French cavalry in the plain at its foot; and not only was the hill again wrested from the infantry, but the guns planted on it fell into the enemy's hands.¹

Everything seemed lost, and would have been so, but for the valour and presence of mind of the French commander-in-chief. He instantly flew to the reserve of cuirassiers, and addressing to them a few words of encouragement, in doing which he received a wound in the shoulder, himself led them on to the charge. They came upon the Spanish infantry, already somewhat disordered by success, at the very time when they were

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99.

Battle of
Saguntum.
Oct. 25.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
343, 346.
Tor. iv. 318,
320. Suchet,
ii. 180, 186.

100.
Final vic-
tory of the
French.

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staggered by a volley in flank from the 116th regiment, which, inclining back to let the torrent pass which they could not arrest, at this critical moment threw in a close and well-directed fire. The onset of the terrible French cuirassiers, fresh and in admirable order, on the Spanish centre, proved irresistible. The Valencian horsemen, already blown and in disarray, were instantly overthrown; the infantry were broken and driven back; not only were the captured guns retaken, but the whole Spanish artillery in that part of the field was seized, and the two wings were entirely separated from each other. The French right at the same time succeeded in regaining the ground it had lost on the hills, and threw the Spanish left opposed to it in great confusion into the plain; their left also was advancing; and Blake, seeing the day lost, retired towards Valencia, with the loss of a thousand killed and wounded, and two thousand five hundred men, and twelve guns, taken. Suchet lost eleven hundred men in the action; but Blake's inability to contend with him in the field was now apparent; and so depressing was this conviction to the garrison of Saguntum, that they capitulated that night, though the breach was hardly practicable, and the garrison still two thousand five hundred strong, deeming it a useless effusion of blood to hold out longer, now that relief had become hopeless.¹

¹ Suchet, ii. 180, 191.
Tor. iv. 218, 221. Nap. iv. 285, 286.
Vict. et Conq. 343, 349.

101.
Delay of Suchet, at Saguntum, till he receives reinforcements.

Though this important victory and acquisition gave the French general a solid footing in the kingdom of Valencia, he did not consider himself as yet in sufficient strength to undertake the siege of its capital, and the situation of Blake was far from being desperate. His forces were still above twenty thousand men: he was master of an intrenched camp with a fortified town enclosed within its circuit; and the sea and harbour gave him unlimited means of obtaining reinforcements and supplies from the rear. Impressed with these ideas, as well as the serious character which the desultory warfare had assumed in

Aragon and Catalonia in his rear, Suchet halted at Saguntum, and made the most pressing representations to Napoleon as to the necessity of reinforcements before he could proceed further in his enterprise. During six weeks that he remained quiescent at that fortress, he was incessantly engaged in making preparations for the siege of Valencia; while the Spaniards, who had all withdrawn behind the Guadalaviar, were daily recruiting their numbers, and completing the arrangements for defence. CHAP. LXV.
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Although, however, a great degree of enthusiasm prevailed among the people, yet no indication appeared which Nov. 7.

augured a desperate resistance; and it was very evident that the Valencians, if shut up within their walls, would not imitate the citizens of Numantium or Saragossa. Nov. 23.

Meanwhile, Suchet on two occasions had defeated powerful bodies of guerillas under Duran and Campillo, who Nov. 23.

were infesting the rear of his army; and at length the divisions of Severole and Reille having, by command of the Emperor, been placed under his orders, and reached his headquarters, he prepared in the beginning of December, with a force now augmented to thirty-three thousand men, to complete the conquest of Valencia; and, for this purpose, pushed his advanced posts to the banks of the Guadalaviar, so that the river alone separated the hostile armies.¹

¹ Suchet, ii. 201, 213.
 Tor. iv. 269, 274. Vict. et Cong. xx. 351, 352.
 Nap. iv. 291.

By drawing considerable reinforcements from the troops in Murcia, Blake had augmented his army to twenty-two thousand men. He had broken down two out of the five stone bridges which crossed the river; the houses which commanded them on the south bank were occupied and loopholed; the city was surrounded by a circular wall thirty feet high and ten thick, but with a ditch and covered way only at the gates. Around this wall, about a mile farther out, was the rampart of the intrenched camp, five miles round, which enclosed the whole city and suburbs, and was defended by an earthen rampart, the front of which was so steep as to require to be

102.
 Suchet approaches and surrounds Valencia.
 Dec. 25.

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Dec. 25.

ascended by scaling-ladders, while a wet ditch ran along its front. But all history demonstrates that such preparations, how valuable soever to a brave and disciplined, are of little avail to a dejected or unwarlike array, if vigorously assailed by an enterprising enemy. In the night of the 25th December, two hundred French hussars crossed the river several miles above the town, opposite the village of Ribaroya, by swimming their horses across, and put to flight the Spanish outposts. The engineers immediately began the construction of two bridges of pontoons for the infantry and artillery; and with such expedition were the operations conducted, and the troops moved across, that, before the Spaniards were well aware of their danger, or the movement which was in contemplation, Suchet himself, with the main body of his forces, and the whole of Reille's division, had not only crossed over, but, by a semicircular march, had got entirely round the Spanish intrenched camp, in such a manner as to cut off the retreat from the city towards Alicante and Murcia. It was precisely a repetition of the circular sweep by which Napoleon, in 1805, had interposed between Ulm and Vienna, and cut off all chance of escape from its ill-fated garrison.¹ The French hussars fell in with the Spanish cavalry hurrying out of the city to stop their advance at Aldaya, several miles round, and to the south-west of the intrenched camp. The former were overpowered in the first encounter, and General Broussand made prisoner; but soon rallying, as fresh troops came up, they regained their lost ground, delivered their general, and pursued their march. At the same time, the better to conceal his real design, Suchet caused Palombini with his division to cross the river a little farther down, and make for Mislata, and the westward of Valencia. The two divisions of Musnier and Habert, which were left on the other bank of the river, commenced a furious assault on the north of the intrenched camp. The roar of artillery was heard on all sides; the rattle of musketry seemed to envelop the city;²

¹ *Ante*, ch. xl. § 49.

² Suchet, ii. 210, 216. Tor. iv. 273, 274. Nap. iv. 296, 297. Vict. et Cong. xx. 553, 554.

and it was hard even for the most experienced general to say to which quarter succour required in the first instance to be conveyed.

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In the midst of all the tumult, however, the French marshal incessantly pressed on to the main object of his endeavours, which was to sweep round the whole southern side of the town, and interpose near the lake ALBUFERA DA VALENCIA,* on the sea-coast, between Blake's army and the line of retreat to Alicante. So anxious was he to effect this object, that he put himself at the head of Harispe's division, which formed the vanguard of the force which had crossed the river at Ribaroya, and, pressing constantly forward, overthrew all opposition, and never halted till he had reached the western margin of the lake, and had become entire master of the southern road. Meanwhile, the action continued with various success in other quarters; the leading brigades of Palombini's division, charged with the attack on Mislata, encountered so tremendous a fire from the Spanish infantry and redoubts, that they fell back in utter confusion almost to the banks of the Guadalaviar; but, without being diverted by this check, fresh battalions crossed over, carried the villages of Mannisses and Quarte, and, following fast on the traces of Harispe, completed the sweep round the intrenched camp, and established the general-in-chief in such strength on its southern front, that he was in no danger of being cut off, and in condition to shift for himself. Deeming himself secure, Suchet at this critical moment ascended the steeple of the village of Chirivilla, to endeavour to ascertain by the line of smoke how the battle was proceeding in other quarters; and, when there, he narrowly escaped being made prisoner by a Spanish battalion, which, in the general confusion, entered the village, then occupied only by a few horsemen and his own suite.¹ It was only by an impetuous charge of his

103.
The Spaniards are defeated, and thrown back into Valencia.
Dec. 26.

¹ Vict. et Conq. xx. 352, 354.
Nap. iv. 297, 300.
Suchet, ii. 214, 223.

* There are several Albuferas; the word means a salt-water lake or marsh, similar to the "Haff" on the shores of the Baltic.

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104.
Victory of
the French.

aides-de-camp and personal attendants, that the enemy, who were ignorant of the important prize within their grasp, were repulsed.

General Habert at the same time not only drove the enemy from the northern bank below Valencia, but, throwing a bridge over the river, under cover of the fire of fifty pieces of cannon, passed over, amidst a terrible fire of cannon and musketry, and pushed his advanced posts on till they met, near the northern end of the lake of Albufera, those of Harispe, which had crossed above the town and accomplished its circuit on the southern side. Thus the investment of the place was completed; and so little had the victors suffered in this decisive operation, that their loss did not exceed five hundred men. That of the Spaniards was not much greater, though they abandoned eighteen guns to the enemy; but they sustained irreparable damage by having their army entirely dislocated, and the greater part of it shut up, without the chance of escape, in Valencia, where Blake with seventeen thousand men had taken refuge. The remainder broke off from the main body, and, fortunately for the independence of the Peninsula, succeeded in reaching Alicante, though in straggling bands, to the number of above four thousand men. It is a signal proof of the contempt which the French general must have entertained for his opponents, that he thus ventured to spread his troops in a circular sweep of more than fifteen miles in length, with their flank exposed the whole way to the attacks of a concentrated enemy little inferior in number, in possession of an intrenched camp. It is a proof, too, of the real foundation for that contempt, that he succeeded in his design.¹

¹ Suchet, ii.
214, 223.
Tor. iv. 271,
279. Nap.
iv. 297, 300.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
353, 356.

The decisive effects of the investment of the intrenched camp and city of Valencia, were speedily apparent. A few days after, Blake, at the head of fifteen thousand men, endeavoured to force his way out of the town by

the left bank of the Guadalaviar ; but though the column at first had some success, and drove in the enemy's advanced posts, yet Blake had not determination enough to enforce the only counsel which could extricate the troops from their perilous predicament. Lardizabal did not evince his usual energy in the advance ; the advice of the heroic Zayas to press on at all hazards, sword in hand, was overruled ; some difficulties at crossing the canals threw hesitation into the movements of the whole ; and, after losing the precious minutes in vacillation, the Spanish general retraced his footsteps to Valencia ; while his advanced guard, to whom the order to return could not be communicated, got safe off to the mountains. A similar attempt was made a few days after on the road to Alicante with no better success. Meanwhile Suchet was commencing regular approaches ; and, on the night of the 5th, the Spanish general, despairing of defending the vast circuit of the intrenched camp with a depressed army and irresolute population, withdrew altogether from it, and retired into the city. The French, perceiving the retrograde movement, broke into the works, and pressed on the retiring enemy so hotly, that eighty pieces of heavy artillery, mounted on the redoubts, fell into their hands, and they immediately established themselves within twenty yards of the town wall. Rightly conjecturing that the resistance of the Spaniards would be more speedily subdued by the terrors of a bombardment than by breaching the rampart, Suchet immediately erected mortar batteries, and began to discharge bombs into the city. Blake at first refused to capitulate, when terms were offered by the French general. No preparations, however, had been made to stand a siege ; the pavement had nowhere been lifted ; no barricades were erected ; there were no cellars or caves, as at Saragossa, for the besieged to retire into to avoid the fire. Ere long some of the finest buildings in the city, particularly the noble libraries of the archbishop

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1811.

105.

Bombard-
ment and
fall of Va-
lencia.
Dec. 28.

Jan. 2, 1812.

Jan. 5.

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LXV.

1812.

Jan. 9.

¹ Tor. iv.

279, 289.

Suchet, ii.

225, 230.

Vict. et

Conq. xx.

356, 364.

Nap. iv.

300, 302.

Jom. iii.

530, 531.

and the university, were reduced to ashes ; and the impossibility of finding subsistence for a population of a hundred and fifty thousand souls besides the troops, as well as the desponding temper of the inhabitants, whose spirit was completely broken by the long train of disasters which had occurred in the east of Spain, soon convinced the Spanish general of the impossibility of holding out. After the bombardment had continued some days, therefore, and the town had been set on fire in different places, he proposed to capitulate. His terms, however, were sternly rejected ; and at length, finding the majority of the inhabitants adverse to any further resistance, he surrendered at discretion.¹

106.

Immense
result of
this con-
quest.

By the capture of Valencia, the French general, in addition to the richest, most populous, and most important city of the Peninsula, next to Cadiz, that remained still unsubdued, became master of sixteen thousand regular troops, the best in Spain, who were made prisoners ; besides three hundred and ninety pieces of cannon, thirty thousand muskets, two thousand cavalry and artillery horses, twenty-one standards, and immense military stores of all kinds. Seldom has a greater blow been struck in modern war : it was like that delivered by the English when they stormed the fortress of Seringapatam. The Spanish army marched out on the 10th of January, and, having laid down their arms, were immediately sent off to France. The elements of resistance still existed in the province : Alicante was unsubdued ; no hostile troops had approached the plains of Murcia, and the mountain range which separated it from New Castile swarmed with active and resolute guerillas. But all unity of purpose or regular government was destroyed among the patriot bands by the fall of the provincial capital ; the desultory warfare gradually died away, or was confined to the neighbourhood of the mountains ;² and the rich and beautiful plain of Valencia, the garden of Spain, the scene which poetic rapture

Jan. 10.

² Suchet, ii.

231, 232.

Tor. iv. 288.

Vict. et

Conq. xx.

364, 365.

sought in vain to enhance, with all its immense resources, fell entirely under the French power, and was immediately turned to the best account by the vigorous administration and oppressive impositions of Marshal Suchet.

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1812.

Order was completely preserved, discipline rigorously maintained ; but all the most energetic characters, especially among the clergy, on the side of independence, nearly fifteen hundred in number, were arrested and sent to France, and some hundreds of them shot when unable from fatigue to travel farther. The perpetrators of the disgraceful murders which had stained the commencement of the war were justly executed ; while an enormous contribution brought into the imperial coffers all that was rescued from private rapacity. On the city and province of Valencia, at the close of four oppressive and burdensome campaigns, the French marshal imposed a contribution of fifty millions of francs, or two millions sterling, equivalent to five or six millions on a small portion of England ; and such was the skill which long experience had given the officers of the imperial army in extracting its utmost resources from the most exhausted country, that this enormous impost was brought, with very little deduction, into the public treasury.¹

107.
Prodigious
contribu-
tions levied
by Suchet.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
364, 365.
Tor. iv. 288,
291. Suchet,
ii. 231, 232.

The subjugation of the province was soon after completed by the reduction of the little fort of Peniscola ; which, after a short siege, capitulated, with seventy-four pieces of cannon and a thousand men, in the beginning of February. This conquest was of importance, as completing the pacification of the whole province, and clearing of all molestation the road from Tortosa. Encouraged by the easy reduction of this stronghold, Montbrun, with his cuirassiers and horse-artillery, who had been detached, by Napoleon's orders, from Marmont's army to act against Valencia, presented himself before Alicante, and began to throw bombs from a few pieces into the

108.
Complete
subjugation
of the pro-
vince.
Feb. 5.

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LXV.1812.
Jan. 29.

town. This ludicrous attempt at a bombardment, however, only had the effect of accelerating the preparations for defence, which were now made in good earnest, and with such effect that the French general retired from before its walls towards Madrid, where his presence was loudly called for by the menacing attitude of the English on the Portuguese frontier. Alicante, meanwhile, daily beheld its defenders strengthened by the arrival of the broken bands who had escaped the wreck of Valencia; a powerful English force, some months afterwards, from Sicily, landed within its walls; and this town shared, with Cadiz and Carthage, the glory of being the only Spanish cities which were never sullied by the presence of the enemy.¹

¹ Suchet, ii.
234, 236.
T. iv. 293.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
366.

109.
Honours
and rewards
bestowed on
Suchet and
his troops.
Jan. 24.

Justly desirous of giving a public mark of his high sense of the great services rendered to his empire by Marshal Suchet and his brave companions in arms, Napoleon, by a decree dated the moment that he received intelligence of the fall of Valencia, bestowed on the former the title of Duke of Albufera, the scene of his last and most decisive triumph, with rich domains attached to it in the kingdom of Valencia; on the latter, an extraordinary donation of two hundred million francs, or £8,000,000 sterling. These immense funds were directed to be realised "from our extraordinary domain in Spain, and such parts thereof as are situated in the kingdom of Valencia," and afford a striking example of the system of extortion and spoliation which the Emperor invariably put in force in all the territories which he conquered. But the hour of retribution had arrived: the English armies on the Portuguese frontier were about to commence their immortal career; Russia was preparing for the decisive conflict; and there remained only to Suchet and his descendants the barren title which recalled the scene of his triumph and his glory.²

² Suchet, ii.
236. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
366, 367.

There is no passage in the later history of Napoleon

which is more worthy of study than the campaigns of Suchet, which have now been considered. Independent of the attention due to the military actions of a general, whom that consummate commander has pronounced the greatest of his captains,¹ there is enough in the annals of his exploits to attract the notice and admiration even of the ordinary historian, who pretends to nothing but a general acquaintance with military affairs. In the other campaigns of the French generals, especially in later times, the interest felt in the individual commander is often weakened by a perception of the magnitude of the force at his disposal, or its obvious superiority in discipline and equipment to the enemy with which it had to contend; and the Emperor himself, in particular, hardly ever took the field from the time when he mounted the imperial throne till he was reduced to a painful defensive struggle in the plains of Champagne, but at the head of such a force as at once insured victory and rendered opposition hopeless. But in the case of Suchet, equally with that of Napoleon himself in the Italian campaign of 1796, or the French one of 1814, no such disproportion of force existed; the resources of the contending parties were very nearly balanced; and it was in the superior fortitude and ability of the victorious general that the real secret of his success is to be found.

If the imperial commander was at the head of a body of men, superior in discipline, equipment, military prowess, and numbers, so far as real soldiers are concerned, to those under the Spanish generals; these advantages, how great soever, were compensated, and perhaps more than compensated, by the rugged and inaccessible fastnesses of which the greater part of Catalonia is composed, the absence of any practicable road through them, the number and strength of the fortified towns, the indomitable spirit and patriotic ardour of the inhabitants, and the vast resources at their command,

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1812.

110.

Reflections
on these
campaigns
of Suchet.
¹ Las Cas.
ii. 11.
O'Meara,
i. 492.

111.

Great ability displayed
by Suchet.

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1812.

from the vicinity of the sea and the succour of the English navy. No one who studies these campaigns can doubt that these circumstances counterbalanced the superior discipline and prowess of the French army in the field ; that the issue of the contest thus came to be mainly dependent on the comparative talents of the two generals ; and that if their relative positions in this respect had been reversed, and Suchet had been at the head of the Spanish, and Campoverde or Blake of the French forces, the result would in all probability have been the entire overthrow of the imperial power in the east of the Peninsula. And in the inexhaustible mental resources of the French general, his fortitude in difficulty, presence of mind in danger, and the admirable decision with which, in critical moments, he abandoned all minor considerations to concentrate his whole force on the main object of the campaign, is to be found the real secret of his glorious successes, as of all the most illustrious deeds recorded in history.

112.
Painful reflections on the conduct of England in this part of Spain.

For the same reason, there is no period of the Peninsular war which an English historian feels so much pain in recounting, as that of this gallant but abortive struggle in the east of Spain. When we reflect on the noble stand which the province of Catalonia, aided only by transient succours from Valencia, made against the armies of two French marshals, which numbered seventy thousand admirable troops, in possession of the principal fortresses of the country, when we recollect how equally the scales of fortune hung on several occasions, and with what decisive effect even a small reinforcement of regular troops, happily thrown in, would unquestionably have had on the issue of the contest ; it is not without the bitterest feelings of regret that we call to mind that, at that very moment, twelve thousand English soldiers lay inactive in Sicily, an island effectually defended by our fleets from foreign invasion, and within only a few days' sail of the scene of conflict. Had half

this force been landed in Catalonia previous to the siege of Tortosa, the French general would never have approached its walls. Had it been added to the defenders of the breaches of Tarragona, the French grenadiers would have been hurled headlong from its ramparts. Had it even come up to the rescue under the towers of Saguntum, the imperial eagles would have retreated with shame from the invasion of Valencia; and the theatre of the first triumphs of Hannibal might have been that of the commencement of Napoleon's overthrow. If we recollect that the capture of Valencia in the east of Spain was contemporaneous with the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo in the west, and that the extinction of regular warfare in one part of the Peninsula, occurred at the very moment when a career of decisive victories was commencing in another, it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of the effects which would have followed such a happy addition of British succour,—as it would have kept alive the conflagration in a quarter where it was already burning so fiercely, and prevented that concentration of the enemy's force against Wellington, in the close of 1812, which wellnigh wrested from him the whole fruits of the Salamanca campaign.

But it is still more painful to recollect that English succour was at hand when the last stronghold of Catalonian independence was torn by overwhelming force from the arms of freedom; that the warriors of the power which had seen the conquerors of Egypt and the fortunes of Napoleon recoil from the bastions of Acre, beheld secure from their ships the grenadiers of Suchet mount the breach of Tarragona; and that, when the garrison of Saguntum saw their last hopes expire by the defeat of the army beneath their walls, British ships received by signal the intelligence, and the conquerors of Maida, within a few days' sail, might have snatched their laurels from the victors. We have a mournful satisfaction in recounting the horrors of the Corunna retreat; we

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1812.

113.
And especially in the failure to succour Tarragona.

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dwell with exultation on the carnage of Albuera ; for that suffering was endured and that blood was shed in a noble cause, and England then worthily shared with her allies the dangers of the contest. But to relate that Tarragona fell unaided when the English banners were in sight ; that deeds of heroism were done, and England though near was not there—this is indeed humiliation, this is truly national dishonour. And under the influence of this feeling, it is not only without regret, but with a sense of justice which amounts to satisfaction, that the subsequent disgrace of the British arms before the walls of Tarragona will be recounted ; for it was fitting that on the one and only spot in the Peninsula where deeds unworthy of her name had been done, the one and only stain on her fame should be incurred.*

114.
Causes of
the weak-
ness of the
English
government
in 1811.

In truth, even a cursory record of the campaign of 1811 must be sufficient to convince every impartial observer that a political paralysis had, to a certain extent, come to affect the British government, and that the cabinet was far from being directed during that year with the firm and unshrinking vigour which had hitherto characterised it. Nor is it difficult to discover to what cause this change is to be ascribed. The year 1811 was, as already noticed,¹ one of extraordinary distress in England : the exports and imports taken together had sunk, as compared with the preceding year, no less than thirty-six millions ; the revenue had declined by above two millions ; while the universal and poignant distress among the manufacturing classes, in consequence of the

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiv. § 60.

* These observations are made in a national view, and for national objects only. No reflection is intended either on the naval and military officers engaged, who had scarcely a land force at their disposal adequate to the rude encounter which awaited them with the French veterans who crowded round the breach of Tarragona, and who did offer, though in a desponding way, to put their force, slender as it was, at the disposal of the Spanish governor. The chief blame rests with the administration, who had not discernment enough in military affairs to see that Tarragona was the vital point of the war in the east of Spain, and that the whole force we possessed in the Mediterranean should have been directed to its support.

simultaneous operation of the Continental System and the American Non-intercourse Act, rendered the contraction of any considerable loan, or the imposition of fresh taxes of any amount, a matter of extreme difficulty. Add to this the enormous expenditure consequent, in the beginning of the year and the close of the preceding one, on the vast accumulation of soldiers in the lines of Torres Vedras, and the unparalleled drain of specie which had taken place from the necessity of supplying the warlike multitude, and at the same time importing one million five hundred thousand quarters of grain, which had not only wellnigh exhausted the treasure of the country, but necessarily crippled all active operations on the part of the English generals in the Peninsula.

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1812.

But notwithstanding the weight justly due to these circumstances, a more minute examination of the state of parties at that period will demonstrate that it was not to them alone, nor even chiefly, that the languid operations of the English on the east of Spain, during this momentous year, are to be ascribed. Wellington had clearly pointed out the important advantages which must accrue to the French from the fall of Valencia, both from the concentration of all their force against himself, which it would enable the imperial generals to make; the resources which would await Suchet, and could immediately be rendered available in the province; and the disinclination which the grandees at Cadiz, having estates in the east of Spain, would in consequence probably feel towards any farther prosecution of the war.* That the British

115.
The insecure
tenure go-
vernment
had of their
offices, the
great cause
of the ineffi-
cient aid of
England in
this cam-
paign.

* "The loss of Valencia would be of great importance: the greater part of the grandees of Spain have estates in that province, upon the revenues of which they have subsisted since they have lost everything elsewhere. It may be expected, therefore, that the loss of this kingdom will induce many to wish to submit to the French yoke. The probability that the fall of Valencia would immediately follow the loss of Tarragona, was the cause of the ferment at Cadiz in the beginning of last summer. Though Blake has found no resources in that province, the French will find in Valencia the resources of money and provisions of which they stand so much in need. This conquest will enable the enemy to concentrate their forces. Even if Suchet should be unable to press on farther to the south of Valencia, and Soult should be unable to com-

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1812.

ministry were fully alive to these considerations, and prepared to act upon them as soon as they felt themselves secure in their offices, is proved by the considerable expeditions which, when equally hard pressed for money, they sent to Alicante from Sicily, in June 1812; and which, though not conducted with any remarkable ability, effectually stopped the progress of the French in the east of the Peninsula. The supineness with which, in the course of 1811, they permitted a much fairer opportunity of effecting this great object to escape, is to be ascribed chiefly to the insecure tenure by which they then held the reins of power, and the determined and impassioned resistance which the Opposition, their probable successors, had invariably offered to the continuance of the contest.*

116.

This was the
real cause of
the feeble
prosecution
of the war
at this
period.

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxiv. § 35.

The Prince Regent, as already noticed,¹ had assumed the reins of power, upon the incapacity of his father, in February 1811; and though he had continued the ministers in their several offices, yet he had done so on the distinct explanation that he was actuated solely by a desire, while the reigning monarch had any chance of recovery, not to thwart his principles, or choice of public servants; and it was well understood that, as soon as the restrictions expired in February 1812, he would send for the Whig leaders, which, in point of fact, he immediately did. The knowledge of this precarious tenure of their power not only disheartened government from any fresh or extraordinary efforts in a cause which they had every reason to believe was so soon to be abandoned by the

municate with him through Murcia, Suchet will be enabled to communicate by a former route that he formerly possessed with the armies of the centre and of Portugal; and his army will be disposable to support the armies of the north and Portugal opposed to us."—WELLINGTON to the EARL of LIVERPOOL, 4th December 1811; GURWOOD, viii. 421, 422.

* "The government are terribly afraid that I get them and myself into a scrape. But what can be expected from men who are beaten three times a-week in the House of Commons? A great deal might be done if there existed in England less party and more public sentiment, and if there was any government."—WELLINGTON to ADMIRAL BERKELEY, April 7, 1810; GURWOOD, vi. 21.

succeeding administration, but weakened to a most extraordinary degree their majority in the House of Commons, which in general, during that interregnum, did not exceed twenty or thirty votes.* The Opposition were so inveterate against the Spanish war, that not only did they declaim against it in the most violent manner on all occasions, both in and out of parliament, but, if we may believe the contemporary authority of Berthier, actually corresponded, during the most critical period of the contest, with Napoleon himself, and furnished him with ample details on the situation of the English army, and the circumstances which would, in all likelihood, defeat its exertions.† It is not surprising that a ministry thus powerfully thwarted, destitute of any members versed in military combination, with a very scanty majority in parliament, and no support farther than the cold assent of duty from the throne, should, during this critical year, have shrunk from the responsibility of implicating the nation, on a more extended scale, in a contest of doubtful issue even under the most favourable circumstances, which was, to all appearance, to be abandoned as hopeless by their successors.

And yet, so little can even the greatest sagacity or the strongest intellect foresee the ultimate results of human actions, and so strangely does Providence work out its mysterious designs by the intervention of free agents, and the passions often of a diametrically opposite tendency of

* On the regency question, on January 21, 1811—a vital question to ministers—the majority was only twenty-two, in a remarkably full house of four hundred and two members; and on Mr Vansittart's resolutions on the bullion report, a still more important division, it was only forty.—See *Parl. Deb.* xviii. 973; and xx. 128.

† “L'intention bien formelle de l'Empereur, est, au mois de Septembre (1811) après la récolte, de combiner un mouvement avec l'armée du midi, un corps de l'armée du centre, et votre armée, pour culbuter les Anglais, et jusqu'à cette époque, que vous deviez agir de manière qu'aucun corps ennemi ne puisse tenir la campagne. Nous sommes parfaitement instruits par les Anglais, et beaucoup mieux que vous ne l'êtes. L'Empereur lit les journaux de Londres, et chaque jour un grand nombre des lettres de l'Opposition, dont quelques-unes accusent Lord Wellington, et parlent en détail de vos opérations. L'Angleterre tremble

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117.

Surprising
effect of
these cir-
cumstances
on the ulti-
mate fate of
Napoleon.

mankind, that if there are any circumstances more than others to which the immediate catastrophe which occasioned the fall of Napoleon is to be ascribed, it is the unbroken triumphs of Suchet in the east, and the strenuous efforts of the English Opposition to magnify the dangers and underrate the power of Wellington in the west, of the Peninsula. Being accustomed to measure the chances of success in a military contest by the achievements of the regular troops employed, and an entire stranger to the passions and actions of parties in a free community, the French Emperor not unreasonably concluded, when the last army of Spain capitulated in Valencia, and the whole country from the Pyrenees to Gibraltar had, with the exception of a few mountain districts, submitted to his authority, that the contest in the Peninsula was at an end, so far as the Spaniards were concerned. And when he beheld the party in Great Britain who had all along denounced the war there as utterly hopeless and irrational on the part of the country—and some of whom, in their zeal against its continuance and to demonstrate its absurdity, had actually corresponded with himself, even at the crisis of the contest—on the eve of getting possession of the reins of power in London, he was naturally led to believe that no cause for disquiet existed in consequence of the future efforts of England and Spain.

He was thus tempted to prosecute, without hesitation,

pour son armée d'Espagne, et Lord Wellington a toujours été en grande crainte de vos opérations."—BERTHIER, *Major-Général, au Maréchal MASSÉNA, Prince d'Essling, Paris, 29 Mars 1811.*—BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, i. 495, 496.

The "extensive correspondence" which is here stated to have gone on between Napoleon and the English Opposition took place in March 1811; that is, when Massena lay at Santarem, and Wellington at Cartaxo, the most critical period of the campaign and the war. Notwithstanding the high authority on which the existence of this correspondence is asserted, it is impossible to believe that it took place with any of the leaders of the Opposition; but it shows with what a spirit the party, generally speaking, must have been actuated on this subject, when any, even the lowest of their number, could, at such a moment, resort to communication with the mortal enemy of their country.

his preparations for the Russian war ; and, before finishing the conflict in the Peninsula, to plunge into the perils of the Moscow campaign. And it was the double strain thus occasioned, as he himself has told us, which proved fatal to the empire.* Had he been less successful in the east of Spain—had the English Opposition less strenuously asserted the impolicy and hopelessness of British resistance in the west, he would probably have cleared his rear before engaging with a new enemy in front. Neither could have withstood his whole force if directed against itself alone ; and the concentration of all his military power against Wellington, in the first instance, would have chilled all chance of success in Russia, and extinguished the hopes of European freedom. So manifestly does Supreme power make the passions and desires of men the instruments by which it carries into effect its inscrutable purposes, that the very events which vice most strenuously contends for, are made the ultimate causes of its ruin ; and those which virtue had most earnestly deprecated when they occurred, are afterwards found to have been the unseen steps which led to its salvation.

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LXV.

1812.

118.

And evidently led
to his ruin.

* “ Cette malheureuse guerre d’Espagne,” said Napoleon, “ était une véritable plaie ; la cause première des malheurs de la France. L’Angleterre s’est fait une armée dans la Péninsule, et de là elle est devenue l’agent victorieux, le nœud redoutable de toutes les intrigues qui ont pu se former sur le Continent—*C’est ce qui m’a perdu.*”—LAS CASES, iv. 205.

CHAPTER LXVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1811 ON THE PORTUGUESE FRONTIER.

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LXVI.

1811.

1.

Wellington's reasons
for under-
taking the
siege of
Badajoz.
1. Añe, ch.
lxiii. § 91.

WHEN the retreat of Massena from Torres Vedras had delivered the realm protected by Wellington from the imperial yoke, and the battle of Fuentes d'Onore had destroyed the former's hopes of retaining a permanent footing within the Portuguese frontier,¹ Wellington's eyes were immediately turned towards Badajoz, the loss of which he justly considered as not only perpetually endangering the west of the Peninsula, but as by far the greatest calamity which had happened to the Allies since Napoleon had taken Madrid. For, though not belonging to the first rank, either from wealth or population, this renowned fortress was of the very highest importance, from its great strength and important situation on the Estremadura frontier—at once forming a base for the operations of an invading army, which should threaten Lisbon on its most defenceless side, that of the Alentejo, and the strongest link in the iron girdle which was to restrain Wellington from pushing his incursions into the Spanish territory. While Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz remained in the enemy's hands, it was equally impossible for Wellington to feel any confidence in the safety of Portugal, or undertake any serious enterprise for the deliverance of Spain. The vast importance of fortresses in war, overlooked or forgotten amidst the unparalleled multitudes who overspread the plains of Europe during

the latter years of the Revolutionary war, was fully appreciated and clearly expressed by the greatest masters in the art of war it produced—Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington.*

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1811.

As the first siege of Badajoz by the English, and its immediate consequence, the battle of Albuera, are the true commencement of the deliverance of the Peninsula, and of that surprising series of victories by which the French were, in two campaigns, stripped of all their conquests in Spain, and driven across the Pyrenees, by an army which could not bring a third of their disposable forces into the field; it is of the highest importance to obtain a clear conception of the relative position of the contending parties at this eventful period, and of the causes which contributed to the production of so extraordinary a result. The British and Portuguese forces in Portugal, nominally above eighty thousand strong, could seldom number above fifty thousand men fit for actual service. This arose from the extremely reduced state of the Portuguese regiments after the French retreat from Torres Vedras, and the vast number of English sick who encumbered the hospitals—the result chiefly of the invincible unhealthiness of fresh regiments when first taking the field, and of the seeds of permanent disease which many of them brought with them from the Walcheren marshes. The strong bond of patriotism which had, during the invasion of their country, held the Portuguese

2.
Comparative view of the contending powers at this period. Forces of the Allies.

* “The loss of Badajoz I consider as by far the greatest misfortune which has befallen us since the commencement of the Peninsular war.”—WELLINGTON.

“Had it not been for the fortresses in Flanders,” says Napoleon, “the reverses of Louis XIV. would have occasioned the fall of Paris. Prince Eugene of Savoy lost a campaign in besieging Lille: the siege of Landrecy gave occasion to Villars to bring about a change of fortune. A hundred years after, in 1793, at the time of the treason of Dumourier, the strong places of Flanders again saved Paris: the Allies lost a campaign in taking Condé, Valenciennes, Quesnoy, and Landrecy. That line of fortresses was equally useful in 1814; and in 1815, if they had been in a condition of defence, and not affected by the political events at Paris, they would have arrested, till the German armies came up, the Anglo-Prussian army on the banks of the Somme.”—NAPOLEON, *Memoirs in* MONTHOLON, i. 292.

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troops to their standards, had been sensibly weakened since the last French columns had receded from their frontiers ; and though the extraordinary fatigues of the pursuit did not at the time disable a large proportion of the troops, yet when they were over, and stationary habits began to co-exist with hot weather, the number of sick became so excessive, that, in the beginning of October 1811, above twenty-five thousand British and Portuguese were in hospital : of whom upwards of nineteen thousand were English soldiers. And such was the amount of desertion or sickness among the Portuguese at the commencement of Wellington's offensive campaign, that while thirty thousand stood on the rolls of the regiments for British pay, not more than fourteen thousand could be collected round the standards of the English general.^{1*}

¹ Wellington to Lord Liverpool. July 18, 1811. Gurw. viii. 111.

3.
Forces of the French.

On the other hand, the French force at that period in the Peninsula amounted to the enormous number of three hundred and seventy thousand men, of whom forty thousand were cavalry ; and of this number two hundred and eighty thousand were present with the eagles. A considerable part of this immense host, indeed, was actively engaged under Macdonald and Suchet in Catalonia, or was necessarily absorbed in keeping up the vast line of communication from the Pyrenees to Cadiz : but still the disposable amount of the troops which could be brought into the field from the three armies of the north, of Portugal, and of the south, was nearly triple what the English general could command, and they seemed to render any offensive operations on his part utterly hopeless. Soult's forces, in Andalusia and the southern part of Estremadura, on the 1st of October, numbered eighty-eight thousand men, including ten thousand cavalry, of whom sixty-seven thousand were present with the eagles : Marmont, in Leon, had sixty-one thousand under his banners, of whom above forty-one thousand infantry, and ten thousand horse, were in the field ; Joseph, in the

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXVI.

centre, had twenty-two thousand French troops, of whom seventeen thousand could assemble round their standards, besides nearly an equal number of Spaniards around Madrid, the greater part of whom could, in case of need, be joined to the columns of Marmont : while the army of the north, under Marshal Bessières, and subsequently General Caffarelli, amounted to the enormous number of a hundred and two thousand men, of whom seventy-seven thousand foot and eleven thousand horse were present with the eagles. In addition to this, reinforcements to the amount of eighteen thousand men were on their march, who actually entered Navarre in August and September of this year ; so that the united force to which the British were opposed in the autumn of 1811 was not less than two hundred and forty thousand men actually in the field.* Supposing a hundred thousand of this immense force to have been absorbed in guarding the fortresses, and keeping up the communications, which probably was the case, there would have remained a hundred and forty thousand men, who, by a combined effort, might have been brought to bear against Wellington, without relinquishing any other part of Spain, or nearly triple the force which he could by possibility oppose to them.^{1†} And these were not raw conscripts or inferior troops, but the very flower of the imperial legions, led by the best mar-

¹ Imperial Muster Rolls, taken at Vitoria. Nap. iv. 588, 589. Wellington to Lord Liverpool, July 18, 1811. Gurw. viii. 109, 112.

* Present with the eagles :—

Soult,	.	.	.	.	67,000
Marmont,	.	.	.	.	51,000
Joseph,	.	.	.	.	17,000
Bessières,	.	.	.	.	88,000
Reinforcements,	.	.	.	.	17,000

240,000

† This calculation coincides with that of Soult, made at the time in a letter to Joseph, even after twenty thousand men had been lost to France by the battle of Salamanca. "If your majesty should collect the army of Aragon, the army of Portugal, and that of the centre, and march upon Andalusia, 120,000 men will be close to Portugal." This was excluding any part of the immense army of the north, full sixty thousand strong, of whom thirty thousand at least were disposable.—SOULT to JOSEPH, August 19, 1812, taken at Vitoria.—See NAP. v. 236.

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shals of the empire, comprising that intermixture of the steadiness of veterans with the fire of young troops, which, it is well known, is most favourable to military success : and they proved themselves capable, at Albuera, Badajoz, and Salamanca, of the most heroic exploits.*

4.
What were
the general
causes which
led to Wel-
lington's
success.

When the magnitude and composition of this force are taken into consideration, and it is recollected that, from the entire extinction of any regular Spanish army in the provinces which it occupied, no serious diversion was to be expected from their exertions, whatever partial annoyance the guerilla parties might occasion—when we call to mind that all the fortresses in the kingdom, with the exception of Cadiz, Carthage, and Alicante, were in possession of the French generals ; that the whole resources of the country were in their hands, and levied with merciless severity, by officers long trained to systematic plunder, and completely skilled in the art, for the use of the troops, who were thus entirely taken off the imperial treasury ; and that the whole conflict was under the immediate direction of a ruler unequalled in the ability with which he always brought his vast resources to bear on the vital point of the campaign ; it becomes an object of the highest interest to inquire how it was that the British were in a condition to maintain their ground at all in the Peninsula, against such overwhelming multitudes ; and still more, how it happened that, laying aside the defensive, they were enabled to dislodge this vast array from the whole strongholds of the country, and finally to drive them, like chaff before the wind, over the Pyrenees, into the south of France.

5.
There must
have been
more than
the merit of
Wellington
and his
troops.

Such an inquiry cannot be satisfactorily answered by merely referring to the military talents of Wellington, and the extraordinary gallantry of his followers. For, granting their full weight to these certainly most important elements in the contest, they could not effect an impossibility, which the discomfiture of such a host by so

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXVI.

small a body of assailants would at first sight appear. Experience, as Wellington himself remarked, has "never, at least in later times, realised the stories which all have read, of whole armies being driven by a handful of light infantry and dragoons;" and even the most sincere believer in the direction of human affairs by a Supreme power, cannot doubt that, humanly speaking, there is much truth in Moreau's assertion, that "Providence favours the strong battalions." There must, it is evident, have been some causes, in addition to the bravery of the English troops, and the great abilities of their chief, which brought about this marvellous deliverance; and it is in their discovery that the great usefulness and highest aim of history are to be found. Such an inquiry can form no detraction from the merits of the British hero: on the contrary, it will lead to their highest exaltation; for no great revolutions in human affairs can be brought about but by the concurring operation of many general causes; and it is in the perception of the incipient operation of these causes, when hidden from the ordinary eye, and contrary to those in action on the surface, and their steady direction to noble purposes, that the highest effort of military or political intellect is to be found.

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I. The first circumstance which gave an advantage to Wellington, and compensated in some degree the vast superiority of the enemy's force, was his central situation, midway between the widely scattered stations of the French generals, and the powerful citadel, stored with all the muniments of war, and resting on that true base of British military operations, the sea, which lay in its rear. Grouped at the distance of two hundred miles from the ocean, on either bank of the Tagus, with a secure retreat by converging lines to the strong position of Torres Vedras, ascertained by experience to be all but impregnable, the English troops were in a situation to threaten either Ciudad Rodrigo and the forces of

6.
His central
position in
the Penin-
sula.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

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Marmont in the north, or Badajoz and the vanguard of Soult in the southern parts of the Peninsula. At the time when they were most widely severed from each other, the forces of Beresford or Hill in Estremadura, and Wellington himself in Beira or on the Agueda, were not distant by more than sixty or seventy miles, and could, if hard pressed, unite in a few days ; whereas the French troops, after the occupation of Andalusia, were scattered over an immense line, more than five hundred miles in length, stretching from the mountains of Asturias to the ramparts of Cadiz ; and nearly two months must elapse before they could combine in any common operations. The force under Marmont, immediately in front of Wellington, was not superior to his own army in strength ; and its means of obtaining subsistence, and keeping considerable bodies of men together, were, from the desert nature of the plains of Leon, much inferior. Thus, by uniting with Beresford on the south of the Tagus, or calling him to his own standard on the north, he had a fair chance of striking a serious blow before the distant succour necessary to avert it could be collected from the banks of the Douro or the Guadalquivir. It was by a similar advantage of a central position between his widely separated enemies, that Frederick the Great so long resisted, on the sands of Prussia, the distant armies of Austria and Russia converging from the Vistula and the Elbe ; that Napoleon, on the banks of the Adige and in the plains of Champagne, so successfully warded off the redoubtable blows prepared for him by the slow tenacity of the Austrian councils ; and that the consul Nero, in the second Punic war, effected the deliverance of Italy, and changed the fate of the world, by taking advantage of the interior line of communication which separated the forces of Hannibal in Apulia from those of his brother Hasdrubal on the banks of the Po.*

* The most perfect example of the wonderful effect of a skilful use made of an interior line of communication, by a force inferior upon the whole, but

II. The circumstances of the British armies in respect of supplies afforded another advantage to the English general, of which he did not fail to avail himself, and in regard to which he was much more favourably situated than his antagonist. The country from Madrid to the Portuguese frontier, and especially towards the Alentejo, was reduced by the devastations and grinding contributions of the French armies to an almost continuous desert; the peasants had for the most part abandoned their possessions, and joined the guerilla parties, with

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7.
Great difficulties of the French from the want of subsistence.

superior to either taken singly, is to be found in the march of the consul Nero, from the ground which he occupied in front of Hannibal in Apulia, to the Metaurus in the plain of Lombardy, where he met and defeated the great Carthaginian army under Hasdrubal, and thereby turned the fate of Carthage and of the ancient world. The march and plan of the consul Claudius Nero are admirably narrated in the following passages from Livy; and they are singularly instructive, as showing how exactly similar his plan of operations was to that which has justly acquired for Napoleon the admiration of the world:—

“Inter hæc ab Hasdrubale, postquam a Placentiæ obsidione abcessit, quatuor Galli equites, duo Numidæ, cum literis ad Hannibalem missi, quum per medios hostes totam ferme longitudinem Italiæ emensi essent, dum Metapontum cedentem Hannibalem sequuntur, incertis itineribus Tarentum delati, a vagis per agros pabulatoribus Romanis ad Q. Claudium prætorem deducuntur. Eum primo incertis implicantibus responsis, ut metus tormentorum admotus fateri vera coegit, edocuerunt, literas se ab Hasdrubale ad Hannibalem ferre. Cum iis literis, sicut erant, signatis, L. Virginio tribuno militum ducendi ad Claudium consulem traduntur, duæ simul turmæ Samnitium præsidii causâ missæ. Qui ubi ad consulem pervenerunt, literæque lectæ per interpretem sunt, et ex captivis percontatio facta; tum Claudius, non id tempus esse reipublicæ ratus, quo consiliis ordinariis provinciæ suæ quisque finibus per exercitus suos cum hoste destinato ab senatu bellum gereret, audendum aliquid improvisum, inopinatum, quod ceptum non minorem apud cives quam hostes terrorem faceret, perpetratum in magnam lætitiâ ex magno metu verteret; literis Hasdrubalis Romam ad senatum missis, simul et ipse Patres conscriptos, quid pararet, edocet, ut, quum in Umbriâ se occursurum Hasdrubal fratri scribat, legionem a Capuâ Romam arcessant; delectum Romæ habeant; exercitum urbanum ad Narniam hosti opponant. Hæc senatui scripta. Præmissi item per agrum Larinatem, Marrucinum, Frentanum, Prætutianum, quâ exercitum ducturus erat, ut omnes ex agris urbibusque commoatos paratos militi ad vescendum in viam deferrent, equos jumenta que alia producerent, ut vehiculorum fessis copia esset. Ipse de toto exercitu civium sociorumque, quod roboris erat, delegit, sex millia peditum, mille equites: pronuciari, occupare se in Lucanis proximam urbem Punicumque in eâ præsidium velle; ut ad iter parati omnes essent. Profectus nocte flexit in Picenum. Et consul quidem, quantis maximis itineribus poterat, ad collegam ducebat, relicto Q. Catio legato, qui castris præsesset.

Nero postquam jam tantum intervalli ab hoste fecerat, ut detegi consilium satis tutum esset, paucis milites adloquitur. Negat ullius consilium imperatoris in speciem audacius, re ipsâ tutius fuisse, quam suum. Ad certam eos se victoriam

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which all the mountain ridges abounded, deeming it better to plunder others than be plundered themselves,* and to such a pitch had their penury risen, that the imperial generals were in all the provinces under the necessity of sending to France, in winter 1812, for seed-corn, to prevent cultivation from being altogether abandoned.† The consequence was, that the French armies approaching the Portuguese frontier either from the south or the north, were unable to keep together in large bodies for any considerable time; and whether the object for which they were assembled had failed or been accomplished, they were equally compelled to separate into widely distant provinces to seek the means of subsistence. They were thus continually experiencing the truth of Henry the Fourth's saying, "That in Spain, if you make war with a small force you are beaten, if with a large one, starved."‡

ducere. Quippe ad quod bellum collega non ante, quam ab satietatem ipsius peditum atque equitum data ab senatu copie fuissent majores instructioresque, quam si adversus ipsum Hannibalem iret, profectus sit, eo ipsos, quantumcumque virium momentum addiderint, rem omnem inclinatuuros. Auditum modo in acie (nam, ne ante audiretur, daturum operam) alterum consulens et alterum exercitum advenisse, haud dubiam victoriam facturum. Famam bellum conficere, et parva momenta in spem metumque impellere animos. Gloriæ quidem ex re bene gestâ partæ fructum prope omnem ipsos laturos. Semper quod postremum adjectum sit, id rem totam videre traxisse. Cernere ipsos, quo concursu, quâ admiratione, quo favore hominum iter suum celebretur."—LIVY, lib. xxvii. cap. 43, 45.

* "The whole country between Madrid and the Alentejo is now a desert, and a still smaller proportion of land than before has been cultivated this winter. The argument of the people of the country is, that it is better to rob than to sow and have the produce of their harvests taken from them; and the French begin to find, that they cannot keep their large armies together for any operation which will take time, and that, when we can reach them, they can do nothing with small bodies."—WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL, 4th December 1811; GURWOOD, viii. 422.

† "Famine had made such ravages over the whole Peninsula in the winter of 1812, that grain was wanting to sow the ground; and the generals-in-chief in Andalusia, La Mancha, Catalonia, and Old Castile, wrote to Berthier to request him to forward seed-corn from France."—BELMAS, *Journ. des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, i. 223.

‡ "Such was the destitution of the country," says Marmont, "on the Portuguese frontier, that in April 1811, the army of Portugal lost its whole artillery and great part of its cavalry horses in six days, between the Coa and the Agueda, of absolute famine. I arrived at the headquarters of the army of the

On the other hand, although Wellington experienced nearly the same difficulties, so far as the resources of the country were concerned, yet he had means of overcoming them which the enemy did not enjoy. Of specie, indeed, he often had little or none : but the credit of the country, his own strenuous exertions, and the efforts of government, went far to obviate that great disadvantage. Not only was the wealth of England applied with lavish, though sometimes misguided prodigality, to the support of his army, and supplies of all sorts brought by every wind that blew to the harbour of Lisbon,—although the extraordinary difficulty of procuring specie from England, or the means of transport in the country, often exposed him to extreme difficulties on the Spanish frontier,—but the great rivers of the Douro, the Mondego, and the Tagus, gave him the important facilities of *water carriage* to a considerable distance in the interior. The former of these rivers was navigable for boats of large burden to within eighty, the Mondego to within a hundred miles of the frontier on the Agueda ; and Wellington took measures, which came into operation in March 1812, which rendered the Douro navigable as far as its junction with that lesser stream. This was an immense advantage, especially when the attack of fortified places was to be undertaken on the Portuguese frontier ; for the principal French magazines were on the Douro and the Tormes, and their battering-train and stores required to be brought

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1811.

8.

Advantages
of the Eng-
lish from the
command of
the navi-
gable rivers.

north in January last. I did not find a single grain of corn in the magazine, not a penny in the military chest ; nothing anywhere but debts, and a real or fictitious scarcity, of which it is hardly possible to form an idea, the natural result of the absurd system of administration which had been adopted. Provisions, even for each day's consumption, could be obtained only by arms in our hands ; there is a wide difference between that state and the possession of magazines which can enable an army to move. On the other hand, the English army is always united and disposable, because it is supplied with money and the means of transport. Seven or eight thousand mules are employed in the transport of its means of subsistence. The hay which the English cavalry consumes on the banks of the Coa and the Agueda, comes from England."—MARMONT to BERTHIER, 26th Feb. 1812; BELMAS, *Journ. des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, i. 629, 632; *Pièces Just.*

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¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
Dec. 5,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
421, 422.
Nap. iv. 365.

from Madrid or Bayonne, the former of which was above two hundred, the latter more than three hundred and fifty miles from the scene of action. Whereas the stores of the English, even when carried to Ciudad Rodrigo or Badajoz, had only to be conveyed a hundred miles by land carriage, not half the shorter distance. It was in a great measure from a consideration of this advantage that Wellington, in December 1811, wrote to Lord Liverpool—"Our situation is improving; and, whatever may be the fate of Valencia, if the Spanish nation hold out, I think they may yet be saved."¹

9.
General in-
terruption of
the French
communica-
tions by the
guerillas.

III. The French generals, following out the established imperial system of making war maintain war, and wrenching the whole expenses of the troops out of the provinces which they occupied, had inflamed immensely the general irritation felt at their rule; and the misery and despair which their exactions produced had augmented to a fearful degree the guerilla bands over the whole country. We have the authority of Mariano d'Orquijo, home secretary to Joseph, for saying, that the great increase of the guerilla parties, especially in Leon, Navarre, and the two Castiles, in the years 1810, 1811, and 1812, arose from the establishment of provincial governments, and the innumerable acts of extortion practised on the inhabitants by the French military authorities.* This mode of providing for themselves was reduced to a perfect system by the imperial generals. A fixed sum was imposed on the inhabitants, and levied from them with merciless severity under the terrors of military execution;

* "His majesty could cite a crowd of instances of oppression which have exasperated the minds of the inhabitants, furnished arms to the insurrection, and given the English grounds for supposing projects which really did not exist, and rendering the war interminable. Let the number of brigands and insurgents in Spain be counted, and it will at once be seen how much they have increased since the institution of the military governments. It is the decree of 8th February 1810, establishing military governments in Navarre, Biscay, Aragon, and Catalonia, that is the real cause of the war still continuing, and the flames of discord having again risen up after they seemed extinguished."
—*The Minister of State D'ORQUIJO to the DUKE DE SANTA FE, Madrid 12th Sept. 1810, taken at Vitoria.* See NAPIER, iv. 517, 523.

and to such a degree of perfection had long practice brought the French troops in this oppressive art, that they contrived to subsist, and to levy all the resources which they required, out of districts which any other army would have considered as absolutely exhausted. The soldiers were everywhere trained themselves to reap the standing corn, and grind it by portable mills into flour; if green, they mowed it down with equal dexterity for their horses; if reaped, they forced it from the peasants' place of concealment, by placing the bayonet to their throats. In this way, they were, to a very late period of the war, when the general ruin of agriculture forced them to rely in some degree on magazines, entirely relieved from all care about communications or supplies, which to the English general, who paid for everything that was consumed by, or required for his troops, often proved a matter of excessive difficulty.¹*

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LXVI.
1811.

¹ Nap. v.
147, and
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 21,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
298.

But, on the other hand, they paid dearly for this advantage in the unbounded exasperation which their extortions excited among the whole rural population, and the universal partisan warfare which they aroused in the flanks and rear of every considerable detachment. The consequence was, not merely that guerilla chiefs sprang up in every quarter where the shelter of mountains rendered pursuit difficult, and under Mina and Duran in Navarre, the Empecinado in the Guadalupe mountains, the curate Merino in Leon, and Il Pastore on the coast of Biscay, kept alive the war, and did incredible mischief to detached bodies of the enemy; but smaller bodies called *Partidas* hovered everywhere round their flanks and rear, and almost entirely obstructed their

10.
Hatred of
the French.
Its great
effects on
the war.

* "The army of Portugal," said Wellington, "has been surrounded for the last six weeks, and scarcely even a letter reaches its commanders; but the system of organised rapine and plunder, and the extraordinary discipline so long established in the French armies, enable it to subsist at the expense of the *total ruin* of the country in which it has been placed; and I am not certain that Marshal Marmont has not now at his command a greater quantity of provisions and supplies of every kind than we have from Lisbon."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 21st July 1812; GURWOOD, ix. 298.

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1811.

communication with each other. On the other hand, the regularity with which the English always paid for all the supplies required for their army, rendered them so popular with the rural population, that they brought information and intercepted letters with incredible diligence and rapidity to headquarters, and kept the British general always as well informed of his adversaries' movements as they were ignorant of his. Thus Wellington, from his central position on the Portuguese frontier, was enabled to select his own time and place for an attack. His preparations were to a surprising degree unknown to the enemy, who, as already more than once remarked, had seldom any means of communicating with each other; and not unfrequently a serious blow was struck before they were even aware that preparations for it were going forward.¹

¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
Dec. 4,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
422.

11.

Jealousy
and discord
of the rival
French
powers in
the Penin-
sula.

IV. The strange and impolitic division of the government of Spain which Napoleon had made, rendered it absolutely impossible that anything approaching to a regular or united plan of operations could be carried on against an enemy. Not only was the central dominion of the crown at Madrid set at naught by the authority of the Emperor, who, from Paris, overruled and directed all the military operations, and yet left to the phantom king the shadow of power and the reality of responsibility; but all possibility of a cordial union between him and his lieutenants was destroyed by the unexampled, and, to a sovereign, highly grating distribution of the resources of the country which the Emperor had established between them. The whole revenues of the provinces were assigned to the French generals, with all the contributions which, by the most rigorous military execution, they could extract from the wretched inhabitants; while the king in the capital was left with the burden of a court, the expenses of which he had no means of defraying, except the pension of a million of francs (£40,000) a month which he received from France; and even that was, in

the later stages of the contest, exclusively devoted to the payment of the troops, leaving the king himself utterly destitute. The consequence was, that the monarch and his court were reduced to such straits, that the royal councillors were seen begging their bread. Joseph himself was compelled to pawn his plate to raise the money required to purchase the necessaries of life; and Marshal Jourdan, major-general of the armies, after borrowing till his credit was exhausted, could with difficulty procure common subsistence.^{1*}

CHAP.
LXVI.
1811.

¹ Nap. v.
445.

Such being the state of the court of Madrid, it is not surprising that the most bitter animosity should prevail between the king and the marshals in the provinces, who seemed placed there only to usurp his authority, and intercept his revenue. His letters to Napoleon, during the whole of his reign, are accordingly filled not only with the bitterest complaints of his own sufferings, but with positive accusations of treason against his lieutenants, especially Soult, whom he openly charged with aspiring to the throne of Andalusia.† But it was all in vain. The power of the sword was irrevocably vested in these rigorous taskmasters; and when Joseph, on one occasion, in desperation laid his hands on a large magazine of corn collected near Toledo, Marmont immediately sent troops, who recovered the magazine by force, telling the owners of the grain they might apply to the monarch for payment.²

12.
Miserable
straits to
which
Joseph was
reduced at
Madrid.

² Nap. iv.
347.

* "I am in such distress," said Joseph, "as never king was before. My plate is sold—my ministers and household are actually starving—misery is in every face, and men otherwise willing are deterred from joining a king so little able to support them—my revenue is seized by the generals for the supply of their troops. I cannot, as a King of Spain, without dishonour, partake of the resources thus torn by rapine from my subjects, whom I have sworn to protect. I cannot, in fine, be at once King of Spain and General of the French. Let me resign, and live peaceably in France. The Marquis Cavalles, a councillor of state and minister of justice, has been seen actually begging for a piece of bread."—JOSEPH to NAPOLEON, *April 11, 1813, taken at Vitoria*; NAPIER, v. 444, 445.

† See confidential letter of the DUKE DE FELTRE to JOSEPH, *Paris, 10th November 1812*; and COLONEL DESPERS to JOSEPH, *22d September 1812, taken at Vitoria*; NAPIER, v. Nos. 5 and 6, *Appendix*; and v. 197, *Text*.

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1811.

13.

Discord of
the marshals
among
themselves.

Nor was it only with the King of Spain that the French marshals, wielding the whole military power of the country, were then at variance. There was no cordial union or co-operation among themselves, and they wanted that indispensable preliminary to military operations—unity of design and implicit obedience among the commanders employed. Each, accustomed to regal state and authority in his own province, and looking to the Tuileries only for the instructions he was to obey, felt his vanity mortified, and his consequence lessened, when he was called upon to act in obedience to, or even to co-operate on equal terms with, any of his brother marshals. To such a height did this discord rise, that Ney was put under arrest by Massena, during the retreat from Portugal, for direct disobedience of orders; and no subsequent military operation of any length was undertaken by any two of the marshals jointly, till the victories of Wellington forced them into one still disunited mass after the battle of Salamanca. Soult remained in Andalusia living in regal magnificence on the banks of the Guadalquivir, and deeply engaged in great designs for that province, from which he was only occasionally diverted by the progress of the British in Estremadura. Bessières, openly condemning both the retention of Badajoz and the siege of Cadiz, found himself so occupied with the protection of the great communication in the north, from the increasing vigour of the Biscay and Navarre guerillas, as to be able to lend only a casual aid to the army of Portugal;* while Marmont, at the head of that force, was immediately exposed to the attacks of Wel-

* "All the world is aware of the vicious system of our operations; every one sees that we are too much scattered. We occupy too wide an extent of country: we exhaust our resources without profit and without necessity: we cling to dreams. Cadiz and Badajoz will swallow up all our resources: Cadiz, because it will not be taken: Badajoz, because it can only be supported by an army. The only safe course would be to destroy the one, and abandon, for the moment, all thought of the other. We should concentrate our forces; retain certain *points d'appui* for the protection of our magazines and hospitals; and regard two-thirds of Spain as a vast battle-field, which a single victory may

lington, without any cordial support either from the army of the centre in his rear, or the distant columns of Soult or Bessières on either flank.

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1811.

When the English general assumed the offensive, and the period of disaster began, the French commanders mutually laid the blame on each other. Joseph loudly accused them of selfish regard to their separate interests; while Napoleon, who could ill brook reverses of any kind, thundered out his censure in such cutting terms from the Tuileries or Russia against them all, as made the greater number of them tender their resignations, and gave rise to a constant and rapid change of commanders on the exposed frontier at the most critical period of the war. Each marshal was solicitous chiefly for the protection of his own province, with the safety of which he was intrusted, and in which the foundations of his fortune or his ruin were laid; and when the king applied to either for succour, the answer he got from Soult or Suchet was, that he might come to Seville or Valencia, but that they could spare no aid to him. Wellington, on the other hand, though at the head of far inferior forces, like Frederick the Great when contending with the armies of Austria and Russia, commanded them all. Experience had taught him the impracticability of any co-operation with the wretched armies of Spain; and, relying on his own British and Portuguese alone, he trusted, by unity of operation and the superiority of a central position, to obtain advantages over forces, in number triple his own, but disseminated over an immense

14.
Vast effects
of this dis-
cord among
Napoleon's
generals.

either secure to or wrest from us, until we change our whole system, and seriously set about pacifying and conquering the country. We have not a man on the coast, from Rousillon to Barcelona; Valencia is the centre of all the insurgents of the north and centre, and still we are besieging Cadiz."—BESSIÈRES to BERTHIER, 6th June 1811; BELMAS, *Appendix*, No. 73, vol. i.

These views were highly displeasing to Napoleon, who a few months after superseded Bessières in the command of the army of the north; but they were far sounder than the Emperor's own, and he lost the Peninsula by not adopting and adhering to them.

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LXVI.

1811.

15.
Desperate
hostility
produced by
the cruelty
of the
French.

surface, and disjointed by separate interests and variety of direction.*

V. But beyond all doubt, the most powerful ally which Wellington had in the prosecution of his operations against the French generals in the Peninsula, was to be found in the oppressive manner in which they were constrained by Napoleon to carry on the war, and the incredible excesses of cruelty to which they had recourse to maintain their soldiers, and repress the hostility which the exactions, everywhere going forward, had excited in all the provinces. When it is recollected, indeed, that nearly four hundred thousand French soldiers were permanently quartered on the Spanish territory, and had been so now for three years; that during the whole of that time this immense body had been paid, fed, clothed, and lodged chiefly at the expense of the conquered districts, who had already been exhausted by the contributions of their own troops and guerillas, and devastated by all the horrors of war during four successive campaigns; it becomes rather a matter of astonishment how they contrived to extract anything at all in the end from a country so long exposed to such devastations, than that their rapine could be levied only by the last atrocities of military execution. As it was, however, the systematic rigour and cruelty with which they enforced their exactions, were as unparalleled in modern warfare as their enormous amount was unexampled. It has been already noticed that, by his own admission, Suchet, whose civil administration was incomparably the least oppressive of that of any of the French generals in the Peninsula, contrived to extract eight millions of francs annually from the war-wasted province of Aragon, or more than double what it had yielded in the most flourishing days of the monarchy,¹ and that two millions sterling were at once levied from the small province of Valencia on its conquest. Judging of the comparative weight of his requi-

¹ *Anle*, ch. lxx. § 56; Suchet, i. 280, 286.

* See *Pieces Just.* in BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges*, i. 530-657.

sitions and those made by others, from the flourishing aspect and general submission of his province compared with the ravaged features and fierce resistance which were everywhere else exhibited, we may safely conclude that his exactions were not to half the amount of those which were elsewhere experienced. It was this oppressive system of military contributions, thus adopted by the French commanders, and invariably acted upon from the very outset of the revolutionary war, and not the passing devastations of the soldiers, that was the principal evil which provoked so universal a spirit of hostility to their government.

The English soldiers at times plundered just as much as their opponents, and perhaps, from their habits of intoxication, and the inferior class in society from which they were drawn, they were on such occasions more brutal in their disorders than the French. But there was one difference between the two, and it was a vital one to the inhabitants of the conquered countries. The English plunder was merely the unauthorised work of the common men, and was invariably repressed by the officers when order was restored; the whole supplies for the troops being paid with perfect regularity from the public funds of government. Whereas the French exactions were the result of a systematic method of providing for their armies, enjoined by express command upon all the imperial generals, and forming the groundwork of the whole military policy of Napoleon. In the case of the former, when discipline was restored, all military oppression ceased, and the presence of the army was felt only in the quickened sale for every species of produce which the inhabitants enjoyed, and the immense circulation of money which took place: in that of the latter, the more thoroughly that military subordination was established, the greater was the misery which prevailed around the soldier's cantonments, from the greater perfection which the system of methodical robbery had attained. And

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16.
Difference
between the
English
plunder and
the French
exactions.

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this difference appeared in the clearest manner when they respectively quitted the countries which they had long occupied. When Soult abandoned Andalusia, of which he had enjoyed the whole resources for three years, such was the universal destitution which prevailed, though the country was the richest in Spain, and had not seen any serious invasion during that time, that the French armies of the south, the centre, and Portugal, had received no pay for one, the civil servants, none for two years; whereas the wealth which had been poured into Portugal by the British army, during the same period, was so enormous, that it had far more than counterbalanced all the devastations of Massena's invasion, and all the sacrifices of the long-protracted contest.^{1*}

¹ Nap. v. 280. Wellington to Lord Liverpool. Nov. 3, 1810. Gurw. vi. 552, and vii. 188.

17.

Dreadful severity of the French military decrees. Aug. 13, 1810.

But, oppressive as were the exactions of the French armies, the severity of the military executions by which they were levied, and the infamous cruelty of the imperial decrees by which it was attempted to suppress the insurrections to which they gave rise, were still more instrumental in producing the general and increasing hostility to their authority which characterised the later years of the war. Not only did Soult in Andalusia issue and act upon a proclamation, directing "no quarter to be given to any of the Spanish armies or armed bands, and all the villages where any resistance was attempted, to be delivered to the flames,"² but Augereau, in Catalonia, announced "that every man taken with arms in his hands should be hung, without any form of process, by the highway; every house from which resistance was made should be burned, and every inhabitant in it put to the sword,"³ and Bessières in the north issued and enforced decrees

² *Anle*, ch. lxx. § 49.

³ See proclamation, Dec. 28, 1809. Belm. i. 429.

* "The French discipline is founded upon the strength of the tyranny of the government operating upon an army, the majority of whom are sober, well disposed, amenable to order, and in some degree educated. They live by the *authorised and regulated plunder* of the country, if any should remain; they suffer labour, hardships, and privations every day; they draw no money from France, and go on without pay, provisions, money, or anything; but they lose, in consequence, half their army in every campaign."—WELLINGTON to LORD WELLESLEY, *January 26, 1811*; GURWOOD, vii. 188.

unparalleled, it is to be hoped, in modern warfare, for the cold-blooded atrocity in which they are conceived. By the first of these it is declared, that "the clergy, alcaldes, curés, and justices of every village, shall be responsible for the exact payment of the contributions, and the furnishing the whole requisitions ordered by the military authorities. Every village which shall not immediately execute the orders which it has received, or furnish the supplies demanded, shall be delivered over to military execution ; and every individual convicted of stimulating the people to withstand or delay obedience to the French orders for supplies and requisitions, shall be forthwith delivered over to a military commission."¹

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¹See decree,
June 6,
1811.
Bélm. i.
567.

By the second decree, still more infamous, it was announced, that "*the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, and nephews* of all individuals who have quitted their domiciles, and do not inhabit the villages occupied by the French, shall be held responsible *in their persons and effects*, for all acts of violence committed by the insurgents ; that if any inhabitant is carried off from his domicile, three of the nearest relations of *some brigand* shall be arrested as hostages, and shot if the individual is put to death ; that every person who shall be absent eight days without permission shall be considered as a brigand, and *his relations* proceeded against in terms of this decree ; that every person not provided with a *carte de sûreté* shall be immediately sent to prison ; every one found corresponding with the insurgents put to death ; and every one writing to the inhabitants of a country occupied by them, sentenced to ten years' imprisonment."² It was reserved for the armies of a power which began the contest with the cry of war to the palace and peace to the cottage, and which professed the most unbounded philanthropy, especially towards the poor, to push, in the nineteenth century, the responsibility for alleged transgressions beyond the utmost limits assigned to them by the jealous tyranny of imperial Rome ; and to denounce

18.
Frightful
cruelty of
Bessiéres'
proclamation.

² Proclamation
of Duke
of Istria,
(Bessiéres.)
June 5,
1811.
Bélm. i.
563.

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the punishments proclaimed, as a penalty not against subjects revolting against their acknowledged sovereign, but against foreign citizens striving for the independence of their country, and discharging what they had themselves a thousand times justly styled the most sacred of human duties.

19.
General
partisan re-
sistance
which this
oppression
produced.

When such were the principles of war, not casually, acted on by ungovernable troops in a moment of fury, but deliberately announced and methodically enforced by the imperial marshals for years together, it is not surprising that an uncontrollable thirst for revenge should have seized a large portion of the Spanish nation. Such, accordingly, was the case from the moment that the decrees establishing the military governments were issued in February 1810. The excessive rigour with which the contributions were everywhere levied, and the crushing weight with which they fell upon the peasantry, filled the guerilla ranks, as well from the bereavements which they occasioned, as the destitution which they produced. They brought the bitterness of conquest home to every cottage in the kingdom; they drove the iron into the soul of the nation. Revenge, that "wild species of justice," gained possession of every heart. If you inquired into the private history of the members of any of the guerilla bands, it uniformly recounted some tale of suffering. One had had his father murdered by the French soldiers at the threshold of his home; another had seen his wife violated and massacred, or his children butchered before his eyes; a third had lost both his sons in the war; a fourth, burnt out of house and home, had joined the bands in the mountains as the only means either of gaining a livelihood or wreaking vengeance. All in one way or other had been driven by suffering to forget every other feeling but the remembrance of their woes, and the determination to revenge them. Incredible were the obstacles which this state of things threw in the way of the French army; vain the attempt by severity to

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Dec. 14,
1811.20.
Extraordi-
nary diffi-
culties
which this
partisan
warfare im-
posed on
the French.

extinguish a spirit which found in the excesses of that very severity the principal cause of its increase. Already in June 1811, Marshal Bessières had bitterly experienced the woful effect of the sanguinary policy which he had pursued.* So formidable did this insurrection become in the course of 1812, that it engaged, as will appear in the sequel, the anxious attention both of Napoleon and his generals, and by degrees absorbed nearly the whole army of the north, seventy thousand strong, in a murderous and inglorious partisan warfare. Mina retaliated in Navarre by a counter-proclamation, in which, in an equally sanguinary but more excusable spirit, because it was in self-defence only, he declared that no quarter should be given to the French troops.†

In the midst of this terrible warfare, it was with the utmost difficulty that the main line of communication from Madrid to Bayonne could be kept open. Fifty thousand men were required to guard it, and, independent of the great fortresses of Pampeluna and San Sebastian, and the fort of Burgos, nineteen fortified posts or blockhouses, each garrisoned by three or four hundred men, were erected on the line from the Bidassoa to the capital; eleven on the more circuitous route by Valla-

* "It is time to take a decided part; the army of the north is composed, it is true, of forty-four thousand men; but, if you unite twenty thousand together, all communication ceases, and the insurrection makes great progress. The coast will soon be lost as far as Bilbao. We are destitute of everything; it is with the greatest difficulty we can live from day to day. The spirit of the country is frightful. The journey of King Joseph to Paris—the retreat from Portugal—the evacuation of the country as far as Salamanca—have elevated their minds to a degree I cannot express. The bands enlarge and recruit daily at all points."—MARSHAL BESSIÈRES to BERTHIER, *June 6, 1811*; BELMAS, i. 560.

† "Navarre," said Mina, in the preamble of this proclamation, "is covered with desolation; everywhere tears are shed for the loss of the dearest friends; the father sees the body of his son hanging for having had the heroism to defend his country: the son witnesses with despair his father sinking under the horrors of a prison, for no other reason than that he is the parent of a hero who has fought for his native land. The mayors, the nobles, the priests, have been all ruined or conducted in captivity into France. All our efforts to introduce a more humane system of warfare, by showing generosity to our captives, have proved nugatory: there remains only the duty of retaliation."—*Proclamation by ESPOZ Y MINA, December 14, 1811*; BELMAS, i. 594.

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1811.

i. Belm.
xii. Introd.

dolid, Segovia, and the Guadarrama ; fifteen on the road from Valladolid to Saragossa ; eight from Valladolid to Santander ; and so on through the whole kingdom.¹

Thus Spain was overspread by a vast iron net, constructed at an enormous expense, and upheld by an incredible expenditure of men and treasure. But though it was sufficient, except in the mountain districts, to chain the inhabitants and prevent any serious insurrection, yet it absorbed a large proportion of the French troops, and was attended with a great and ceaseless consumption of life to the invaders ; so that Wellington did not over-estimate its importance when, in December 1811, he wrote to Lord Liverpool : " The people of the country are still disposed to resist whenever they see a prospect of advantage. Buonaparte is yet far from having effected the conquest even of that part of the Peninsula of which he has military possession ; and, in truth, the devastation which attends the progress of our enemies' arms, and is the consequence of their continuance in any part of the country, *is our best friend, and will in the end bring the contest to a conclusion.*"²

¹Wellington to Lord Liverpool. Dec. 4, 1811. Gurw. viii. 424.

21.
Wellington's difficulties.

But if such were the difficulties—arising partly from the nature of the country which was the seat of war, partly from the absurd distribution of power in the Peninsula by Napoleon, and partly from the oppressive and exterminating mode of conducting war which the Revolution had established—with which the French generals had to contend, Wellington on his part did not recline on a bed of roses ; the obstacles which thwarted his operations, though arising from different causes, were nearly as great as those with which his antagonists had to strive ; and it is hard to say whether an impartial survey of their relative situations does not leave his superiority as great, as if his vast inferiority of force and unbroken career of victories were alone considered.

The first and most important circumstance which con-

stantly thwarted all the English general's efforts for the deliverance of the Peninsula, was the long-established and incurable corruption of every part of the Portuguese administration. This deplorable evil, the sad bequest of ages of despotism, had not at that period been counterbalanced in the dominions of the house of Braganza, by the feverish and sometimes almost supernatural energy which, in a democratic convulsion, springs from the temporary ascendant of poverty, and the unrestrained career of passion. Portugal had lost its monarch and regular government; its rulers owed their election in a great degree to popular choice, and the country was in the most violent state of general excitement. But the convulsion, as Wellington often observed, was anti-Gallican, not democratic; the old influences still pervaded every department of the administration; and that fearful vigour was wanting which invariably appears when uncontrolled power is for the first time vested in the masses, and the people enjoy the dangerous prerogative of laying impositions on property, from the operation of which they are, from their poverty, entirely exempted. Hence the government and whole administration were corrupt and imbecile, to a degree which appears almost inconceivable to those who have either experienced the permanent vigour of monarchical, or the transient energy of democratic states. So inveterate were abuses in every department, that the people could not conceive any administration without them; and when the soldiers enrolled under British command received the full pay promised them, their astonishment knew no bounds, they having never, under their native officers, known what it was to have less than one-half or two-thirds absorbed by the speculation of those through whose hands the money passed.¹

Had Wellington possessed the same unlimited power in the civil as he did in the military affairs of Portugal, these abuses would speedily have been corrected; but, unfortunately, this was very far indeed from being the

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22.

Corruption
and imbecility of the
Portuguese
administra-
tion.

¹Wellington
to the Prince
Regent of
Portugal.
April 1813.
Nap. v. 422.

CHAP.
LXVI.

1811.
23.

Imbecility
with which
the regency
at Lisbon
discharged
their duties.

case. His direct authority extended only to the command of the armies; and although his influence was, doubtless, considerable with the regency at Lisbon, and he was most ably seconded by the British ambassador there, the Honourable Charles Stuart,* yet his efforts to effect an amelioration in the public service, and communicate the requisite vigour to the administration, were perpetually thwarted by the inability of its members to comprehend his views; the extraordinary difficulty of reforming, amidst the din of external war, long-established domestic abuses; and the constant dread which the regency had of interfering with existing emoluments, or adopting any measures of compulsion against inferior functionaries and magistrates, lest they should endanger their own popularity. Their nervousness on this last head was such as to render government perfectly powerless, either in enforcing the laws or drawing forth the resources of the country; and all the remonstrances of Wellington were unable to make them even adventure upon the very first duty of executive administration, that of making inferior officers do their duty. The consequence was, that though the taxes were very heavy, they were most irregularly collected, and the rich and privileged classes discovered a thousand ways of evading them. Ample levies of men were voted; but no adequate measures were ever taken to bring forth the soldiers, or send them back if they had left their colours.¹

¹Wellington
to Prince
Regent of
Portugal,
April 9,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
52, and viii.
6, 7.

24.
Wretched
state of the
troops in
the field.

The army in the field was seldom more than half the number for whom pay was drawn; clothing, ammunition, provisions, and stores of all sorts, were constantly wanting for the troops; the means of transport were rarely provided for them, and never in time; and even the English subsidy for the support of thirty thousand men, which was regularly advanced, was so much diverted to other objects, that the pay of the men was almost always

* Afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay, the British ambassador at St Petersburg.

in arrear; and in April 1813, the army in the field had received no pay for seven, the garrison troops for nine, the militia for fifteen months. The consequence was, that Wellington was obliged to feed the Portuguese troops from the British magazines; and this, in its turn, impoverished the resources, and paralysed the efforts of the British army.* Had these evils occurred in the French armies, their generals would speedily have applied a remedy by taking the supplies wanted by force, and sending the owners to the regency for payment; but such a proceeding would have been altogether repugnant to the English mode of carrying on war. It was abhorrent to the nature of Wellington, and the principles on which he was conducting the contest; and, if adopted, he was well aware it would have purchased present relief by the sacrifice of all the grounds on which he hoped for ultimate success. Thus the evils continued through the whole campaigns. Remonstrance and representation were the sole remedies relied on; the whole of this gigantic civil conflict in his rear fell on the English general, as always ensues in such cases; and not unfrequently he was engaged in presence of the enemy, and within sight of their videttes, in lengthened yet vain memoirs on the most complicated details of Portuguese civil administration.¹

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¹ Nap. v.
422, 423.
Well. to
Prince
Regent of
Portugal.
Well. to
Stuart.
April 9,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
52, and viii.
6, 7.

The next circumstance which paralysed on repeated

* "The unfortunate governments in the Peninsula had been reduced to such a state of decrepitude, that there was no authority in Spain or Portugal, before the French invasion. The French invasion did not improve this state of things; and, since that event, no crime that I know of has been punished in either, excepting that of being a French partisan. Those malversations in office—those neglects of duty—that disobedience of orders—that inattention to regulation, which tend to defeat all plans for military operation, and ruin a state that is involved in war more than all the plots of French partisans, are passed unnoticed, notwithstanding the numerous complaints which Marshal Beresford and I have made. The cause of all this is the mistaken principle on which the government have proceeded. They suppose the best foundation for their power is a low vulgar popularity, of which the evidence is the shouting of the mob at Lisbon, and their regular attendance at their levees; and to obtain this bubble, they have neglected the essential duty of making inferior functionaries do their duty, which, if done, would ere this have saved both

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1811.

25.

Wretched
condition of
the Spanish
troops, and
jealousy of
their gene-
rals.

occasions the operations of the English general, and this often at the most critical moments, was the wretched condition and total destitution of the Spanish armies, and the pride and obstinacy which rendered their generals unreasonably jealous of foreign interference, and equally averse to and incapable of any joint measures by which a material or durable benefit to the common cause could be obtained. Such, indeed, were the inefficiency and destitution of the Spanish forces, that it was soon discovered that their presence was a burden rather than an advantage to the Anglo-Portuguese troops, by bringing into the field a host of useless assistants, who were incapable of rendering any effectual service in the field against the enemy, and who yet devoured all the resources by which the war could be maintained. So great were these evils found to be that, after the experience of the Talavera campaign, Wellington formed the resolution, from which he never afterwards deviated, of engaging in no joint undertaking whatever with the Castillian armies; but, trusting to them merely for distant diversions, determined to rely upon his own British and Portuguese forces alone for any operations in the front of the conflict. In fact, after the battles of Ocana and the Tormes, in the close of 1809,¹ no Spanish force worthy of the name of an army existed within the sphere of the English operations;² and on the only subsequent occasion

¹ *Ante*, ch. lxii. § 59, 63.

² Well. to Castanos, July 24, 1811.

Gurw. viii. 133, and ix. 98, 111.

countries. On the same principle, they will not regulate their finances, because it interferes with some man's job. They will not lay on new taxes; because none who do so are ever favourites with the mob. They have a general income-tax of ten and twenty per cent; but no one has yet paid a hundredth part of what he ought to have done. Thence, from want of money, they can pay nobody. The hire of mules and carts is never paid; the horses die, and the people desert; the commissaries have no money to buy provisions, or provide the means of transport; and thence the troops are constantly suffering; and, as I will not allow pillage, every department of the service is paralysed. In consequence, I have been obliged to incorporate the Portuguese troops with the English divisions, and both are paid from one military chest; but the evil exists in its full extent with the detached corps and garrison."—WELLINGTON to COLONEL GORDON, 12th June 1811: GURWOOD, viii. 6, 7.

on which necessity compelled a junction of the British and Spanish in the field—at Albuera, in 1811—the former only escaped a bloody defeat, induced by the obstinacy and intractability of the Spanish generals, and the unwieldy character of their troops, by the surpassing valour of the English soldiers, and the shedding of torrents of English blood.*

At a subsequent period of the war, the lustre of Wellington's victories, and the universal voice of all men of sense in the Peninsula, which loudly demanded that he should be put at the head of the whole military operations, compelled the Cadiz government, much against their will, to appoint him generalissimo of all the armies; and the increased vigour and efficiency which, in spite of every difficulty, he speedily communicated to them, clearly demonstrated of what benefit it would have been to the common cause if he had been earlier elevated to the supreme command. But at the stage of the contest we are at present engaged with, he was not only thwarted by the frequent jealousy of the Spanish generals, one of whom, Ballasteros, was so mortified at his appointment, that he resigned his command in disgust, and wellnigh occasioned the loss of the whole fruits of the battle of Salamanca; but he found his influence and usefulness interrupted by treason and disloyalty in the seat of government itself. So fiercely, indeed, had the passions of democracy now begun to burn at Cadiz, that, in their

26.
Treachery of
the Cortes.

* "Your excellency may depend upon the truth of what I have repeatedly had the honour of stating to you in conversation, that until the Spanish armies shall possess regular resources, by which they can be supplied during any operation which they may undertake, and are equipped in such a manner that casual or trifling difficulties will not impede their operations; and until the troops are disciplined, as all other troops are which are to meet an enemy in the field, it is useless to think of plans of co-operation between this army and those of Spain, which must be founded on the active offensive operations of all parts of the armies of all the three nations. I should deceive myself and you, and the governments of both nations, if I were to encourage such a notion; and if I were to undertake the execution of such a plan, I should risk the loss of my army for no object whatever."—WELLINGTON to CASTANOS, 24th July 1811; GURWOOD, viii. 133.

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animosity at the orderly spirit of aristocratic rule in England, the republican leaders forgot the whole evils and wrongs of French invasion ; and at a period when the deliverance of the Peninsula was no longer hopeless, but reasonable grounds for expecting it had arisen from the heroic efforts of the English troops, and the approaching hostility of the northern powers, a secret negotiation was going on between Joseph and a considerable proportion of the Cortes, for the delivery of Cadiz to the French troops, and the submission of the whole Peninsula to the imperial government. They were willing to concede everything, and acknowledge the Napoleon dynasty, provided the democratic constitution of 1812 was recognised.¹

¹ Nap. v.
82, and 406,
407.

27.

Their advances to,
and preparations to join
the French.

This conspiracy, suspected at the time, and since fully demonstrated by the documents which have been brought to light, soon made its effects apparent from the undisguised hostility which the Cortes manifested towards Wellington and the English army : the occasional excesses of the soldiers were magnified by the voice of malignity ; their services were forgotten, their great deeds traduced ; the contagion had reached some of the generals of the armies, who were prepared to pass over with their troops to the enemy ; and nothing but the unbroken series of Wellington's victories, and the loud voice of fame which heralded his exploits, prevented the government of the Cortes, on the eve of the deliverance of their country from the hands of the spoiler, from blasting all the glories of the contest which it had so heroically maintained, by uncalled-for submission and shameless treachery at its termination. Many persons in the Cortes held secret intercourse with Joseph, with the view of acknowledging his dynasty, on condition that he would accede to the general policy of the Cortes in civil government. Early in 1813, the Conde de Montejo, then a general in Elio's army of Murcia, had secretly made propositions to pass over, with the forces under his command, to King

Joseph: and soon afterwards the whole army of the Duke del Parque, which had advanced to La Mancha, made offers of the same nature. They were actually in negotiation with Joseph, when the Emperor's orders obliged the French army to abandon Madrid and take up the line of the Ebro.¹

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1811.

¹ Nap. v.
406, 407.

The last circumstance which, throughout his whole career, impeded the operations of Wellington, and had often wellnigh snatched victory from his hand when almost within his grasp, was the extraordinary difficulty which the English government experienced, especially in 1811, in procuring supplies of provisions and money for his army, and the very limited amount of reinforcements in troops which the circumstances of the British empire, or the apprehensions of ministers, allowed them to send to his support. The circumstances have been already fully detailed² which had at that juncture, to an unprecedented degree, reduced the resources of the empire. It was, in truth, the crisis of the war. Both England and France were suffering immensely from their mutual blockade; and the contest seemed reduced to the question who should starve first. At such a time the closing of the American harbours and the vast markets of the United States to the productions of British industry, added to the calamity of an unusually bad harvest, which required nearly five millions sterling to be sent out of the country for the purchase of subsistence, not only rendered it almost an impossibility for the government to send to Portugal either specie or provisions, but made it a matter of extraordinary difficulty for the English general to obtain from any quarter supplies for his army.³

28.
Extreme
penury of
the English
army in
money
during the
war.

² *Ante*, ch.
lxiv. § 112,
120; and ch.
lxv. 113,
114.

³ Nap. v. 50.

His correspondence, accordingly, during the whole of his campaigns, but especially in the years 1810 and 1811, is filled with accounts of the difficulties which he experienced in getting provisions and the means of transport, and the backwardness of government in making the requisite remittances; and not unfrequently, in the

29.
Wellington's loud
complaints
of his want
of specie.

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1811.

bitterness of his heart at finding his best-laid schemes rendered abortive by the want of perhaps an inconsiderable sum in ready money, or a few stores in siege equipage, sharp complaints escaped him at the incapacity of the administration, which, engrossed with its parliamentary contests, left undone the weightier matters of the war.* But in cooler moments, and on a just retrospect, of the extraordinary difficulties with which government, as well as himself, had to struggle at that crisis, the candour of Wellington's nature modified the censure which the anxiety of the moment had called forth: he admitted that it was the want of *money, that is, of specie*, which was felt during the war; but that commodity, from the effect of the Bank restriction, was then exceedingly scarce in England, and frequently could not be procured at all; and that he had uniformly received the most cordial support and encouragement from the ministers, without excepting Mr Perceval, "than whom a more honest, zealous, and able minister never served the King."¹

¹ Well. to
Spencer
Perceval,
Esq. June
6, 1835.
Nap. v. 50.

^{30.}
Foundation
for Well-
ington's com-
plaints.

In truth, however, the complaints of Wellington were not altogether unfounded; and there can be no doubt that his confidential letters to Mr Stuart, the English ambassador at Lisbon, written at the time, must be regarded by history as documents on which more reliance should be placed than subsequent general recollection, at the distance of five-and-twenty years, when the difficulty

* The greater part of these complaints will be found quoted in Napier's *Peninsular War*, v. 52-54: Counter Remarks, *infra*: and they are scattered through all Gurwood's *Correspondence*.

As a specimen, the following extracts may be given:—*April 20, 1810.*—"The Ministry are as much alarmed as the public, or as the Opposition pretend to be: the state of public opinion is very unfavourable to the war; and the general opinion is, that I am inclined to fight a desperate battle which is to answer no purpose. Their private letters are in some degree at variance with their public instructions, and they throw upon me the whole responsibility of bringing away the army in safety, after staying in the Peninsula till it becomes necessary to evacuate it. But it will not answer, in these times, to receive private hints and opinions from ministers; which, if attended to, would lead to an act directly contrary to the spirit, and even the letter of the

was over, and unequalled success had gilded the retrospect of the past with perhaps unfaithful colours. Even at the moment, however, when the contest was going on, Wellington expressed to Mr Stuart his strong sense of the extraordinary efforts which the British government was making to supply the wants of the army, as well as the discreditable manner in which they were impeded by the selfishness of the Portuguese administration. "The Portuguese government," says he, "ought to be aware of the difficulties in which Great Britain is involved in order to procure, not money's worth, *but money—specie*—to maintain the contest, of which the probable want alone renders the result doubtful. In order to avoid this want, they are *making the most gigantic efforts*, at an enormous expense, to send to this country every article that an army can require, in hopes to save the demand for, and expenditure of specie, in the purchase of these articles in the country; and yet the Portuguese government, instead of seconding their laudable efforts, set themselves against them."¹ Although, therefore, he was often most grievously hampered by the want of gold and silver coin, and driven to every imaginable resource to procure supplies, by his own exertions, for his army, yet his difficulties arose from other and more general causes than any want of zealous co-operation on the part of the English government; and, without entirely exculpating them from blame in allowing their attention to be more engrossed by their parliamentary struggles than the

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¹ Wellington to Stuart, Aug. 27, 1811. Gurw. viii. 222.

public instructions."² *June 5, 1810.*—"This letter will show you the difficulties under which we labour for want of provisions, and of money to buy them. The miserable and pitiful want of money prevents me from doing many things which might and ought to be done for the safety of the country—yet, if anything fails, I shall not be forgiven."³ *December 22, 1810.*—"It is useless to expect more money from England, as the desire of economy has overcome even the fears of ministers, and they have gone so far as to send home the transports, in order to save money."⁴ *July 26, 1811.*—"The soldiers in the hospitals die because the government have not money to pay for the hospital necessities; and it is really disgusting to reflect upon the distresses occasioned by the lamentable want of funds to support the machine we have put in motion."⁵ There are a great many letters to the same effect.

² Well. to Stuart.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

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31.

Uniform
neglect by
the British
of warlike
preparations
in time of
peace.

Peninsular contest, it may safely be affirmed that these causes were the following :—

Though the contest had now continued nearly eighteen years, the English government were still, thanks to our insular situation and invincible navy, mere novices in the art of military warfare ; and the subordinate functionaries in every department required literally to be taught their several duties in the presence of the enemy. There is nothing surprising in this ; it is the natural result of the peculiar circumstances, unassailable power, nautical habits, popular government, and commercial character of the English people. Though naturally brave, and always fond of military renown, they are the reverse of warlike in their ordinary habits. Naval supremacy has long since made them trust to their wooden walls for defence ; commercial opulence opened more attractive pursuits than the barren heritage of the sword. In peace they invariably relax the sinews of war : no amount of experience can persuade them to take any antecedent measures either to avert disaster or to ensure success : they constantly expect that, without the least previous preparation, and with greatly inferior numbers, their armies, newly raised, uninstructed, and inexperienced, are to vanquish their enemies in every encounter. And the extraordinary valour of the Anglo-Saxon race has so often in pitched battles more than compensated every other disadvantage, that the result seems almost to justify the anticipation.

32.
Great error
in the Eng-
lish mind
on this
subject.

But though in a regular fight native bravery may often make amends for the absence of military instruction or matured preparation, it is otherwise with the varied duties of a protracted campaign. Skill and experience on the part of all engaged in the vast enterprise are there indispensable ; and for their want no amount of talent in the general, or of courage in the troops, can afford any compensation. An army, if brave and well disciplined, may often vanquish a more experienced, but less sturdy

antagonist, in the field ; but it will prove no match for him in marching, retreating, finding provisions, or enduring the long-continued fatigues of a campaign. The same array which has successfully emerged from the perils of the battle-field, may ingloriously melt away amidst the accumulated horrors of ill-arranged hospitals ; the courage which can mount the deadly breach, may be rendered wholly unavailing by the bluntness of intrenching tools, or the shortness of scaling-ladders ; and the fruits of a mighty victory, capable of changing the fate of the world, may be reft from the conquerors by the incapacity of commissaries in bringing up supplies, or the remissness of government in furnishing a few pieces of heavy artillery. Wants of this sort were those which Wellington so often and bitterly experienced in the course of the Peninsular campaign. Every person in the army, with a very few exceptions, from the general to the drummer, was at first ignorant of a great part of his most necessary duties ; and the commander-in-chief was obliged himself to attend to the minutest details in every department, under the penalty of seeing his best laid projects miscarry from the ignorance or incapacity of those to whom some subordinate duties had been committed.

Every one who has been intrusted with the responsibility of directing new and inexperienced public servants in any department, must in the outset have encountered this difficulty. It may be conceived, then, with what weight it pressed on a general at the head of an army taking the field for the first time, on any extended scale, for a century, and filled with officers and civil functionaries to whom experience was unknown, and on whose theoretical instruction no pains whatever had been bestowed. In the battle-field, or evolutions in presence of the enemy, their native steadiness and admirable discipline rendered them from the very outset adequate to any emergency ; but how small a portion of the life of a soldier do such

33.
Universal
inexperi-
ence of in-
ferior func-
tionaries.

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events occupy, and how much does military success in the end depend upon other and less dazzling qualities, in which long experience had rendered the French perfect proficient! The commissariat was at first ignorant of its duties, and often failed in procuring supplies at the critical moment; the health of the soldiers, especially those newly sent out, frequently suffered dreadfully; and the military hospitals, charged sometimes with twenty thousand sick at a time, fostered contagion rather than cured disease;* the inebriety of the soldiers amidst the wines of the south too often aggravated the tendency to malaria fever which arose from the death-bestrodden gales of Estremadura; the engineers were able and instructed, but the troops were unskilled in the labour of the trenches, the working tools often insufficient, the mining chisels blunt and useless, and the battering ordnance worn out or inadequate; and these obstacles, perpetually marring the general's operations at the most vital moment, could only be overcome by shedding torrents of heroic blood. This universal ignorance is not to be wondered at: it ensues inevitably in a nation whose power has superseded the necessity of military experience, and whose temper has discouraged the military art.¹

¹ See Wellington in Gurwood, *passim*.

34.
Causes which led to these obstacles to Wellington's success.

The ministry shared in the general deficiencies. Trained for the most part to civil professions, they were generally unfit to judge of military arrangements; they yielded the management of the war to professional men of old standing, frivolous habits, capacity inferior to their own, and often immersed, from long inactivity, in a flood of insignificant details; and the pressing concerns of parliament, with the general conduct of government, left them little leisure to acquire, when in harness, the information requisite for a vigorous and enlightened prosecution of

* The total number of sick and wounded who passed through the military hospitals of Portugal, from 1808 to 1814, amounted to the enormous number of three hundred and sixty thousand men.—SIR JAMES M'GREGOR'S *Evidence before the House of Commons*.

the cabinet duties connected with the military department. Above all, they were, to an extent which now appears almost inconceivable, unaware of the vital importance of *time* in war. They almost always attended in the end to the general's requests; but they often did so at a period when the season for gaining the important effects anticipated from them had passed: they generally combined operations so as to favour his designs, but they not unfrequently marred these minor enterprises by the incapacity of the untried officers whom they placed in command, and whom court favour or parliamentary influence had forced into these situations.

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It is in vain to ascribe these unhappy arrangements to the fault of any particular body of men then intrusted with the reins of government; they obviously arose from general causes, for they characterise equally the first years of every contest in British history. Many a Byng has been morally executed for faults really owing to the constitution of his country: many a Burgoyne has capitulated, because the means of salvation were not, through popular heedlessness, or the universal parsimony, save in presence of danger, of popular assemblies, put into his hands. If foresight and wisdom in previous preparation, commensurate to their vigour and resolution when warmed in the contest, had been given to democratic societies, the English people in modern, as the Roman in ancient times, must long since have obtained the empire of the world. Instead, therefore, of ascribing peculiar blame to any one class in the British islands for the manifold difficulties with which Wellington had to struggle in the first years of the contest, let us regard them as the inevitable consequence of previous neglect and long-continued security on the part of the whole empire; and let this reflection only enhance our admiration of the hero whose resolution and sagacity prepared, and the army whose bravery and perseverance secured, the means of overcoming all these obstacles,

35.
Causes of
the general
ignorance
on military
affairs.

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and brought the British army in triumph to the walls of Paris.

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36.

The British
difficulties
greatest in
the begin-
ning.

But on considering the comparative weight of the difficulties with which the British and French generals had to contend in this memorable contest, one observation applies to them all, eminently characteristic of the conflicting principles on which it was conducted, and the antagonist powers which were there brought into operation on the opposite sides. The French, by disregarding every consideration of justice or humanity, forcibly wrenching from the vanquished people their whole resources, and extracting from their own countrymen, by the terrors of the conscription, all the physical force of sixty millions of subjects or allies, had obviously the advantage in the outset; and the chances were very great that, before the English could gain any solid footing in the Peninsula, they would be driven from it by a concentration, from all quarters, of overwhelming forces. This, accordingly, was what had happened in all the previous campaigns of the British during the war; and it had been prevented from again occurring only by the admirable foresight with which the position of Torres Vedras had been chosen and strengthened.

37.

The French
difficulties
greatest in
the end.

But, on the other hand, when the first brunt of the imperial onset had been withstood, and the contest was reduced to a series of protracted campaigns, the balance became more even, and at length, by the natural reaction of mankind against oppression, inclined decisively in favour of the British general. The English method of procuring supplies by paying for them, though extremely costly, and far less productive at first than the French mode of taking possession of them by force, proved in the end the only one which could permanently be relied on, for it alone did not destroy in consumption the means of reproduction. The English system of procuring men for the army by voluntary enlistment, though incapable of producing the vast arrays which were mustered by the conscription round

the imperial standards, did not exhaust the population in the same degree, and permitted the British armies to be progressively increased to the close of the contest, while the French, in its latter stages, declined with fearful rapidity. The English principle of protecting the inhabitants as far as it was possible, amidst the miseries of war, though in the beginning extremely burdensome, in comparison of the summary methods of spoliation and rapine invariably practised by the French, proved in the long run the most expedient ; for it alone conciliated the affections, and husbanded the resources of the people, by whose aid or hostility the contest was to be determined. It is precisely the same in private life : the rapacity of the robber, and the prodigality of the spendthrift, often outshine in the outset the unobtrusive efforts of laborious industry ; but mark the end of these things, and it will be found, that in the long run honesty is the best policy, and that the fruits of rapine, or the gains of dishonesty, ultimately avail as little to the grandeur of nations as to the elevation of individuals.

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Having taken his determination to act on the offensive against the French in Spain, and to endeavour in the outset to recover the important fortress of Badajoz, Wellington moved his headquarters in the middle of April to Estremadura, taking with him twelve thousand men to reinforce General Beresford, who had previously begun the campaign in that province, and had made himself master, after a few days' siege, of Olivenza, with its garrison of four hundred men. Badajoz was immediately thereafter blockaded ; but the great floods of the Guadiana prevented any serious operations being commenced against it till the first week of May, when, the communications across the river having been effected, the town was invested on both banks. Soult no sooner heard of the enterprise than he began to collect troops at Seville for its relief ; and on this occasion, the deficiencies of the

38.
Commencement of the first siege of Badajoz.

April 17.

May 5.

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May 8.

May 10.

May 12.

¹ Nap. iii.
523, 527.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
235. Jones,
Pen. War.
i. 381, 385.

English army, in all the knowledge and preparations requisite for a siege, were painfully conspicuous. All the zeal and ability of the engineer officers, and they were very great, could not compensate the wants of an army which had at that period no corps of sappers and miners in its ranks, nor a single private who knew how to carry on approaches under fire. A double attack was projected—one on the castle, and another on the fort of St Christoval, and on the night of the 8th ground was broken at the distance of four hundred yards from the latter. A bright moon, however, enabled the enemy to keep up a destructive fire on the working parties. A vigorous sally two days afterwards was repulsed with loss; but the Allies, pursuing too far, were torn in flank by a discharge of grapeshot from the ramparts, which in a few minutes struck down four hundred men; and though the besiegers continued their operations with great perseverance, the fire of St Christoval was so superior, that four out of five of the guns placed in the trenches were speedily dismounted. On the 12th, ground was broken before the castle, and a battery commenced against the *tête-de-pont*; but before any progress could be made in the operations, intelligence was received that Soult was approaching; and Beresford instantly and wisely gave orders to discontinue the siege, and assemble all the forces in front to give battle.¹

39.
Forces of the
opposing
armies at
Albuera.

Atlas,
Plate 67.

Having by great exertions collected all his disposable forces in and around Seville, this indefatigable marshal had set out on the 10th from that capital, and joining Latour Maubourg on the road, made his appearance at Villa Franca and Almendralejo on the 14th, having in four days cleared the defiles of the Sierra Morena, and transported his troops from the banks of the Guadalquivir to the streams which nourish the Guadiana. On the 15th he moved forward his advanced guard, occupying the heights in front of ALBUERA, where Beresford's army was concentrated. The force which was here at the disposal of the English general was considerable in numerical

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amount; but in composition, with the exception of the British, it was very inferior to the homogeneous veterans of the French marshal. General Blake arrived from Cadiz with nine thousand men early on the morning of the 16th; Castanos, with three thousand, chiefly horse, was also at hand; and Don Carlos d'España's men, who had still kept their ground in the northern slopes of the Sierra Morena since the rout of Medellin, swelled the Spanish force to sixteen thousand men, of whom above two thousand were cavalry. The Anglo-Portuguese force, consisting of two divisions and Hamilton's Portuguese brigade, numbered seven thousand British, and eight thousand Portuguese sabres and bayonets; so that the Allies, upon the whole, had in the field thirty thousand men, of whom three thousand were horse, with thirty-eight guns; but of these the English and Portuguese alone could be considered as regular troops—the former only relied on for the decisive shock. Soult's force was inferior in numerical amount, being only nineteen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry; but they were all veteran troops, whom Napoleon justly termed "the finest in Europe," and he had fifty guns admirably harnessed and served; so that, in real military strength, his force was decidedly superior to that of his antagonist.¹

¹ Beresford to Wellington, May 18, 1811. Gurw. vi. 573. Nap. iii. 528, 532. Vict. et Conq. xx. 235, 236. Tor. iv. 66, 67. Hamilton's Pen. Camp. iii. 83.

Beresford, to whom Castanos, with a delicacy and forbearance very unusual at that period in the Spanish generals, had relinquished the command of the Allied army, had drawn up this motley array on the heights lying to the north of the Albuera streamlet, with the right thrown back in a semicircle, so as to guard against his flank being turned in that quarter, where still higher eminences rose beyond the extremity of the line. The British divisions, commanded by Cole and Stewart, were in the centre, between the two great roads leading from the village of Albuera to Badajoz and Valverde, where the principal attack was anticipated: to the left of these stood Hamilton's Portuguese; while Alten, with his brave

40.
Description of the field of battle, and the French and English positions.

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brigade of Germans, occupied the village and bridge of Albuera, in advance of the centre of the whole line : the right was strongly occupied by the Spaniards under Blake, whose position, on a line of heights, promised to render their unwieldy bulk of some service in making good the position. The French army, according to their usual custom, was arrayed in dense masses in the wood on the south of the Albuera stream, partly on the open ground in rear both of the Albuera stream and Ferida rivulet, and partly behind a wooded height in advance of the Ferida rivulet, but behind the Albuera stream, which ran along the foot of the heights on the Allied right. Soult, seeing that Beresford had neglected to occupy this high ground which commanded the whole field beyond his extreme right, in order to strengthen his centre commanding the great road, resolved to make his principal attack in that quarter ; and with this view, during the night, unknown to the English general, and under the screen of that lofty height, concentrated his principal forces, consisting of Gerard's corps, Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, and Rutý's guns, in all fifteen thousand men, with forty pieces of artillery, on the southern slope of the great hill, within half a mile of Beresford's right, but screened entirely from their view. The remainder of his forces, consisting of Werle's division, Godinot's brigade, the light cavalry, and twelve guns, were arrayed in the wood to the south of the Albuera stream ; the bridge over which, with the village of the same name, was to be the object of an early attack, to distract the enemy's attention from the powerful onset preparing against them under cover of the lofty eminence on the right.¹

¹ Nap. iii.
532, 533.
Beresford's
Despatch.
Gurw. vii.
574. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
236, 237.

41.
Battle of
Albuera.
May 16.

The action began early on the morning of the 16th, by a strong body of cavalry who were seen to cross the Albuera stream, opposite the Allied right, while Godinot's division, preceded by ten guns, issued from the wood, and bore down upon the bridge. The British guns in the centre, immediately opening upon the moving mass,

ploughed through its columns with great effect ; but the brave assailants pressed on, while their cannon answered the English fire ; and, crowding towards the bridge in great numbers, they were soon warmly engaged with Alten's Germans at that important point. As the Hanoverians were soon pressed by superior numbers, Beresford advanced a Portuguese brigade to their support. A Spanish battery, placed on a height near the church, played warmly on all the approaches to the bridge : the French artillery thundered back without intermission, but with less effect ; and the enemy made no material progress in that quarter. Perceiving, however, that Werle's division did not follow in the footsteps of Godinot's, Beresford justly concluded that the real attack was not intended at the village ; and despatched Colonel Hardinge to Blake to warn him that a serious onset might immediately be expected on the right, and entreating him to throw back his line and face outwards, so as to be prepared to receive it. The Spanish general, with characteristic obstinacy, refused to credit the information, and declined to endanger his troops by moving them in presence of the enemy. Colonel Shepeler, however, an intelligent German officer, who was serving as a volunteer in the Spanish staff, and has since written a valuable history of the war, was of the opposite opinion ; and fixing his eyes steadily on the right, while Blake and Castanos were engrossed only with the attack on the bridge, at length showed them the glancing of deep columns of bayonets in the interstices of the wood in that direction. Yielding reluctantly to the evidence of his senses, Blake upon this ordered the requisite change of front ; the second line of Spaniards was moved forward and drawn up at right angles to the first, thus forming a bar across the extremity of the line, perpendicular to its direction, exactly as took place with the Russians in the middle of the battle of Eylau.¹

Before, however, this critical movement could be com-

¹ Nap. iii.
534, 536.
Tor. iv. 68.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
238, 239.
Hamilton,
iii. 84, 85.
Ante, ch.
xliv. § 70.

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42.

The French
accumulate
their forces
on the right,
and force
the Spanish
position.

pleted, the enemy, in appalling strength, were upon them. Werle, as Beresford had foreseen, no sooner saw Godinot's leading battalions engaged at the bridge, than, leaving a few troops to connect the lines together, he rapidly counter-marched to the westward, and issuing from the wood, joined the rearguard of Gerard's corps as it was mounting the hill on the right of the Allies; while at the same time the light cavalry, quitting Godinot's column, forded the Albuera, and ascending the hill at the gallop, joined the already formidable mass of Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, who stood opposite to the British heavy dragoons under Lumley. Thus, while the Spanish line was going through the difficult operation of changing its front, it was attacked by fourteen thousand infantry, four thousand noble horse, and forty pieces of cannon. The contest was too unequal to be of long duration. Though such of Blake's troops as had got to their ground before the enemy were upon them, opposed a stout resistance, and for some time kept the assailants at bay, yet their line was irregular and confused when the firing began; huge gaps were visible, into which the French cavalry poured with irresistible force; Rutý's guns, now playing within point-blank range, threw the moving regiments into confusion; and after a short and sanguinary struggle, the Spaniards were overthrown at all points, and the whole heights on which they stood fell into the enemy's hands, who immediately placed their batteries there in position, in such a manner as to command the whole field of battle.¹

The day seemed worse than doubtful; and Soult, thinking that the whole army was yielding, was concentrating his reserves, and arranging his cavalry, so as to be able to convert the retreat into a rout, when Beresford, seeing the real point of attack now clearly pronounced, ordered up the British divisions from the centre to the scene of danger on the right. This order was instantly obeyed: the lines fell back into open column, and with a swift and steady step moved to the right, up the heights,

¹ Nap. iii.
535, 536.
Beresford's
Despatch,
Gurw. vii.
374. Tor.
iv. 68, 69.
Vict. et
Cong. xv.
288, 289.

43.
Dreadful
disaster of
the British
division
which first
got up.

from which the tumultuous array of the Spaniards was now hurled in wild confusion. But before they had reached the summit, a dreadful disaster, wellnigh attended with fatal consequences, befell them. The morning, which had throughout been cloudy and unsettled, at this time broke into heavy storms of wind and rain, accompanied with thick mists, under cover of one of which the French advance against the Spanish position had been effected. Another interval of darkness of the same description proved as fatal to the British as it had been favourable to their antagonists. When General Stewart, with the leading brigade of the second English division, still in column, arrived at the slope of the height which the French had gained, and had got through the Spaniards, he opened a heavy fire upon the enemy from the front rank ; but, finding they could not be shaken by musketry, immediately ordered a charge of bayonets ; and the regiments were in the act of deploying for that purpose, when they were suddenly and unexpectedly attacked in rear, and in great part destroyed by two regiments of hussars, and one of Polish lancers, which had got round their flank unobserved during the mist. The 31st alone, which still remained in column, resisted the shock ; but the remainder which had got into line, or were in the act of deploying, consisting of the Buffs, the 66th, and the second battalion of the 48th, were instantly pierced in many different quarters by the lancers from behind, and almost all slain on the spot, or driven forward into the enemy's line and made prisoners. Seven hundred men and three standards fell into the hands of the cavalry : in the tumult of success they charged the second line coming up ; and such was the confusion there from this disaster, that Beresford himself only escaped being made prisoner by his great courage and personal strength, which enabled him to parry the thrust of, and dash from his saddle a lancer who in the affray assailed him when alone and unattended by his suite.¹

¹Beresford's
Despatch,
Gurw. vii.
574. Nap.
iii. 536, 537.
Hamilton,
iii. 86. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
241, 242.
Tor. iv. 69,
70.

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44.

Gallant attempt to retrieve the day by Houghton's brigade.

All seemed lost ; for not only were the heights, the key of the position, taken, and crowned with the enemy's infantry and artillery, but the British brigade, which had advanced to retake them, had almost all perished in the attempt to do so. With the troops of any other nation it would probably have been so ; but the English were determined not to be defeated, and it is surprising how often such a resolution in armies, as well as in individuals, works out its own accomplishment. The Spaniards, incapable of perceiving the change which had taken place in the action, continued to fire with great violence directly forward, although the British were before them : no efforts on the part of Beresford could induce them either to advance a step or cease their discharges ; while the succeeding columns of the English threw in their volleys, in like manner, on the Spaniards, and endangered Blake himself. But amidst all this confusion the unconquerable courage of the British, by a kind of natural instinct, led them to the enemy, and retrieved the disasters of the day. The 31st, under Major l'Es-trange, isolated on the heights it had won in the midst of enemies, still maintained its ground, and kept up, now deployed into line, a murderous fire on Gerard's dense columns, by which it was assailed. Dickson's artillery speedily came up to the front ; and, firing with prodigious rapidity, covered the advance of Houghton's brigade, who ere long got footing on the summit, and formed in line on the right of the 31st. The remainder of the second division, under Abercrombie, shortly after pressed gallantly forward and took post on its left, while two Spanish corps also came up to the front ; and Lumley's horse-artillery, on the extreme right, by a most skilful and well-directed fire, kept at a distance the menacing and far superior squadrons of Montbrun's cuirassiers.¹

¹ Kausler, 640. Nap. iii. 537. Vict. et Conq. xx. 241. Tor. iv. 70, 71.

Still the combat, though more equal, was far from being re-established. The British troops, in mounting the hill, were exposed to a dreadful fire of grape and

musketry from the French guns and masses at the summit ; hardly half of any regiment got to the top unhurt ; Houghton himself fell while nobly heading and cheering on the 29th in the van ; Duckworth of the 48th was slain ; while the 57th and 48th, which next came up, and opened into line in the midst of this terrific fire, soon had two-thirds of their numbers struck down by the fatal discharges of the enemy's artillery. But this combat of giants was too terrible to be of long duration : the French, though suffering enormously in their dense formation, stood their ground gallantly ; neither party would recede an inch, though the fire was maintained within pistol-shot ; and a deep though narrow gully, which ran along the front, rendered it impossible in that direction to reach the enemy with the bayonet. At this awful crisis the ammunition, from the rapidity of the discharges, failed ; in some of the British regiments, despite all their valour, the fire slackened ; Houghton's brigade slowly and in firm array retired ; a fresh charge from the now reassembled Polish lancers captured six English guns ; and Beresford, deeming the battle lost, was making preparations for a retreat, and had actually brought up Hamilton's Portuguese brigade from the neighbourhood of the bridge of Albuera into a situation to cover the retrograde movement.¹

In this extremity the firmness of one man changed the fate of the day, and in its ultimate effects, perhaps, determined the issue of the Peninsular war. While Beresford, under circumstances which not only justified, but perhaps called for the measure, was taking steps for a retreat, an officer on his staff, endowed with the eye of a general and the soul of a hero, boldly took upon himself the responsibility of venturing one more throw for victory. Colonel, afterwards LORD HARDINGE,* ordered General Cole to

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45.

The British
at the sum-
mit of the
hill begin
to fail.

¹ Kausler,
541, 542.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
241, 242.
Nap. iii.
537, 539.
Beresford's
Despatch.
Gurw. vii.
574, 575.

46.

Desperate
charge of
the fusilier
brigade.

* Afterwards Governor-general of India, whose unconquerable courage and great capacity surmounted the dangers of Ferozeshah, and gained the decisive victory of Sobraon over the Sikhs in February 1846.

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advance on the right with his division, which was still fresh, and, riding up to Abercrombie on the extreme left, directed him also to bring his reserve brigade into action. Cole quickly put his line, with the fusilier brigade in the van, in motion, crossed the Aroya streamlet, and mounted the hill on the right; while Abercrombie, with the reserve brigade of the second division, at the same time clearing their way through the throng, ascended on the left. These brave men soon changed the face of the day; and the advance which the enemy had made in the centre against Houghton's brigade proved in its results extremely disastrous, by bringing them into a situation where the *flanks*, as well as the front, of their deep columns were exposed to the incessant fire of the English infantry. It was exactly the counterpart of what had happened to Lannes' column which broke into the middle of the Austrian line at Aspern,¹ and the terrible British column which all but gained the battle of Fontenoy. Houghton's brigade, in the centre, encouraged by the timely succour, and having received a supply of ammunition from the rear, again faced about, stood firm, and fired with deadly aim on the front of the mass; while the fusilier brigade on one flank, and Abercrombie's on the other, by incessant discharges prevented any of the lines behind from deploying. The carnage, in consequence, was frightful, especially in the rear of the column; and the very superiority of the French numbers magnified the loss, and augmented the confusion, from causing every shot to tell with effect upon the throng. Pressing incessantly on, the fusilier brigade recovered the captured guns, and dispersed the lancers. But a dreadful fire met them when they came near Gerard's infantry: Colonel Myers was killed; Cole himself, and Colonels Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkshawe, fell badly wounded; and the whole brigade, "staggered by the iron tempest, reeled like sinking ships."²

¹ *Ante*, ch. lvii. § 59.

² *Nap.* iii. 539, 540. *Vict. et Conq.* 240, 251. *Behm.* i. 183. *Jom.* iii. 505.

"Suddenly recovering, however," says Colonel Napier, in strains of sublime military eloquence, "they closed on

their terrible enemy ; and then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights. In vain did Soult by voice and gesture animate his Frenchmen ; in vain did the hardiest veterans, extricating themselves from the crowded column, sacrifice their lives to gain time and space for the mass to open out on such a fair field ; in vain did the mass itself bear up, and, fiercely striving, fire indiscriminately on friends and foes, while the horsemen, hovering on the flanks, threatened to charge the advancing line. Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry. No sudden burst of undisciplined valour, no nervous enthusiasm, weakened the stability of their order : their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in their front ; their measured tread shook the ground ; their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation ; their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd, as foot by foot, and with a horrid carnage, it was driven by the incessant vigour of the attack to the farthest edge of the hill. In vain did the French reserves, joining with the struggling multitude, endeavour to sustain the fight : their efforts only increased the irremediable confusion ; and the mighty mass, at length giving way like a loosened cliff, went headlong down the ascent. The rain flowed after in streams discoloured with blood ; and eighteen hundred unwounded men, the remnant of six thousand unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill.*

Beresford, seeing the heights thus marvellously gained, immediately took steps to secure the victory. Blake's first line, which had not yet been engaged, was removed to the village and bridge of Albuera ; Alten's Germans,

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47.

The heroic
gallantry of
the English
infantry
gains the
day.

¹ Nap. iii.
541. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
241, 243.
Belm. i. 183.
Jom. iii.
505.

48.
Conclusion
of the
battle.

* " ——— Stabat devota juvenus,

Damnata jam luce ferox, securaque pugnae,
Promisso sibi fine manu : nullique tumultus
Excussere viris montes ad summa paratas :
Innumerasque simul pauci terraque marique
Sustinuere manus : tanta est fiducia mortis."

LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, iv. 533.

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and the whole Portuguese, were thus rendered disposable, and formed a mass of ten thousand men, who advanced up the hill in the footsteps of Abercrombie and the fusilier brigade; while Ballasteros and Zayas, with their Spanish brigades, also pressed on in pursuit. Gerard's corps was soon entirely dissolved; almost all the men threw away their arms, dispersed, and sought for shelter in the wood behind the Albuera stream. Werle's reserve, five thousand strong, was brought up by Soult to cover the retreat; but it was overwhelmed in the flight, and the general himself killed. All, on the admission of the French themselves, was lost, if in that fatal moment the artillery had shared in the general consternation.¹ But Rutty skilfully drew his guns together, and, emerging through the throng of fugitives, stood forth gallantly in the rear, and by the vigour of his fire arrested the advance of the conquerors. Such was the rapidity with which the guns were worked, and the precision of their aim, that the Spaniards and Portuguese, advancing in the rear of the British, suffered severely; the British infantry were obliged to wait till their own artillery came up, and meanwhile, the confused masses of the enemy got over the stream and regained the cover of the wood. Montbrun's cuirassiers restrained the Allied cavalry, which repeatedly endeavoured to charge; though, from the advanced position which they assumed to do so, they suffered dreadful losses from the British artillery; and at length this sanguinary contest gradually died away on both sides, rather from the exhaustion of the victors than any means of farther resistance, save in their artillery, which remained to the vanquished.²

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
243.

² Jones, i.
387, 388.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
243, 245.
Nap. iii.
542, 543.
Belm. i.
183. Beres-
ford's Des-
patch.
Gurw. vii.
575, 576.

49.
Its results.

Such was the battle of Albuera, memorable as being the most desperate and bloody of any that occurred, not only in the Péninsular, but in the whole Revolutionary war. Though the firing had only lasted four hours, eight thousand men had been struck down on the part of the French, and nearly seven on that of the Allies—an amount of loss which, in proportion to the number of men actually

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engaged, is unparalleled in modern war, at least on the side of the victors. The Spaniards lost two thousand men, the Portuguese and Germans six hundred, and the British alone four thousand three hundred—a chasm out of seven thousand five hundred English soldiers engaged, which marks clearly upon whom the weight of the contest had fallen. When the Buffs were called together, after the battle, only three privates and one drummer answered to the muster-roll, though great numbers who had been made prisoners, and escaped in the confusion, joined during the night and next day. The unwounded survivors were less numerous than the wounded. All the efforts of the Portuguese videttes, to whom the care of the maimed was intrusted, could not provide for the multitude who required their aid; the streamlets on the field, swollen with the rain, which fell without intermission all night, ran red with human blood; while Blake, soured by his own defeat and the English success, refused to lend any assistance to his bleeding allies. But, disastrous as was the condition of the British, that of the French was still more calamitous: forced to a retreat, they were encumbered by six thousand five hundred wounded, for whose relief no means whatever existed. Eight hundred of these unhappy men fell into the hands of the British, who left five hundred prisoners and one howitzer in the hands of their opponents.¹

¹ Jones, i. 388. Nap. iii. 543, 544. Beresford's Despatch. Gurw. vii. 577, 578. Hamilton, iii. 87, 90.

But though the trophies of victory were thus nearly balanced, the result showed decisively on which side success had really been won; for, after remaining the next day in the wood from which he had issued in the morning of the battle, Soult on the following night retired towards Seville by the road he had advanced, leaving the British to resume their position undisturbed around the bastions of Badajoz. As soon as it was ascertained that the enemy had retreated, the siege of that fortress was resumed on the left bank of the river, and the light cavalry followed the enemy towards the Sierra Morena, whither

50.
Wellington arrives, and takes the command of the siege of Badajoz. May 18.

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May 23.

¹ Nap. iii.
545, 547.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
249, 250.
Belm. i. 184.

51.
Moral re-
sults of the
battle.

Soult was retiring. He left the great road to Seville, and fell back towards Llerena, his cavalry being stationed near Usagre. There, a few days afterwards, they were attacked by the 3d and 4th dragoon guards, supported by Lumley's horse-artillery in front, while Madden's Portuguese cavalry assailed them in flank. The result was, that they were completely overthrown, with a loss of a hundred slain and eighty prisoners. This brilliant affair terminated Beresford's independent operations: Wellington had arrived in person, and taken the command of the siege of Badajoz; Hill, who had returned to Portugal, resumed the command of the second division and the covering army; and Beresford set out for Lisbon, where his influence and great administrative talents were indispensably called for, to restore the dilapidated condition of the Portuguese army.¹

Though Beresford's firmness had not proved equal to the dreadful crisis of the battle itself, and he was saved, like Sir Hyde Parker at Copenhagen, by the moral courage of an inferior officer, yet his resolution in maintaining his ground next day, with the diminished and bleeding remnant of his host, was deserving of the highest admiration, and had the most important effect on the fate of the campaign. Soult had still fifteen thousand veterans unhurt when he retired to Llerena; and so strongly had Beresford felt the vast superiority of that force to the handful of British who remained after the battle, that, on the evening on which it had occurred, he had written to Wellington, avowing that he dreaded a renewal of the action and a bloody defeat on the succeeding day; although the troops, justly proud of their victory, had crowned the hill which they had won by such efforts with several hundred flags taken from the Polish lancers, where they waved defiance to the enemy. That he had the firmness to make good his post, and brave such a danger, is a memorable instance of moral resolution; while the retreat of Soult, under circumstances when, by persevering, he might have perhaps achieved success, cannot but be considered as a blot in

his escutcheon. In truth, it afforded the most convincing proof of the ascendancy gained by that extraordinary display of unconquerable intrepidity which the English army had made in this well-debated field, and which encircled their arms with a halo of renown that carried them through all the subsequent dangers of the war. The French military historians are the first to admit this. "Great and disastrous," say they, "was the influence which this fatal day exercised upon the spirit of the French soldiers. These old warriors, always heretofore conquerors in the north of Europe, and often in Spain, no longer approached the English but with a secret feeling of distrust; while they on their part discovered, by the result of the battle of Albuera, the vulnerable side of their antagonists, and learned that, by resisting vigorously the first shock, and taking advantage of superiority of number, they would rarely fail to gain the victory."¹ The French were still true to the character given of them by the ancient historian: "Terrible in the first onset, they are easily withstood by patience, if that shock is not successful."* In truth, however, the British learned on this bloody field a simpler lesson, which they never afterwards forgot, and which they applied with fatal efficacy in all the subsequent battles of the war—viz. that the English *in line*, overlapping the enemy's flanks, could successfully resist and defeat the French *in column*; and to the constant adherence to this procedure the unbroken career of success which followed is in a great measure to be ascribed.²

¹ Vict. et.
Conq. xx.
249.

² Jom. iii.
506, 507.
Nap. iii.
557, 558.

Delivered by the retreat of Soult from so formidable an antagonist, and deeply impressed with the necessity of straining every nerve to regain the important fortress of Badajoz, Wellington had no sooner arrived on the spot than he recommenced the siege with the utmost vigour. Both parties had improved to the uttermost the short breathing-time afforded them by the battle of Albuera,

52.
Renewal of
the siege of
Badajoz.
May 27.

Atlas,
Plate 69.

* "Galli truces primo impetu, mox patientia et fortitudine repelluntur."—
CÆSAR.

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and never was activity more indispensable to either ; for it was well known that succour was approaching, and that, unless the place could be carried in a fortnight, the united armies of Marmont and Soult would arrive from the north and south, and compel the raising of the siege. During the absence of the Allied forces, Philippon had levelled the trenches and destroyed the approaches of the besiegers, and not only repaired his own works where injured by the fire, but constructed strong interior retrenchments behind the points where breaches were expected, and considerably augmented his supplies of provisions. Colonel Dickson, who commanded the British engineers, had on his side, by extraordinary activity, got together a train of fifty pieces of heavy artillery ; considerable supplies of stores had arrived, and six hundred gunners were at hand to man the pieces. All things being at length in readiness, the place was wholly invested on the 27th, and two days afterwards ground was broken against Fort Christoval. The operations of the besiegers were pushed with the utmost vigour, as Wellington was well aware that the success of the enterprise entirely depended on celerity ; and on the evening of the 6th June the breach was declared practicable. At midnight the storming party advanced to the attack. They reached the glacis in safety, and descended unobserved into the ditch. Upon arriving, however, at the foot of the breach, it was discovered that after dark the rubbish had been cleared away from the bottom of the slope, so that it could not be ascended ; but the troops, boiling with courage, refused to retire, and remained making vain attempts to get in by escalade, till the severity of the fire and the stout resistance of the enemy obliged them to retreat.¹

May 27.

June 6.

¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 12,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
12. Nap.
iv. 187, 190.
Jones, i.
391. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
249.

Taught by this check the quality of the enemy with whom they had to deal, the British took more precautions in their next attempt. The fire continued with great vigour, both on Christoval and the body of the place, on

1811.
53.Second as-
sault on
Christoval,
which is
repulsed.

June 9.

the three following days, though, from the age and bad condition of the artillery, which had been drawn from Elvas, and of which a part was a hundred and fifty years old, a considerable proportion of the battering guns had become unserviceable. A heavy cannonade was also kept up on the castle ; but although the besiegers' batteries played on it at the distance only of five hundred yards for seven days, from the 2d to the 9th June, yet so defective was the ordnance, that at the end of that time the breach was hardly practicable ; and at any rate it could not be stormed while the enemy held Christoval, as the guns from the latter fort swept along the foot of the castle wall and over the ground in its front. Another attempt, therefore, was made to carry the latter fort ; but though the storming party was stronger, and the ladders longer than before, a second defeat was experienced. The garrison, which on the former assault had been only seventy-five, was now increased to two hundred men ; their spirit, much raised by their former success, was now elevated to such a pitch that they stood on their bastions inviting the British with loud cheers to come on : and the provident care of the governor of the fortress, Philippon, whose great talents in this species of warfare were now fully manifested, had not only given each soldier four loaded muskets, but arranged a formidable array of bombs, hand-grenades, and powder-barrels on the top of the rampart, ready to be rolled over among the assailants the moment they reached the foot of the wall. Notwithstanding these obstacles, and the heroic valour of the garrison, who fought bravely in defence of their post, the assaulting columns united at the bottom of the breach, the scaling-ladders were applied, and some daring men reached the summit, but they were immediately bayoneted by the garrison ; and at the same time the bombs and powder-barrels, being rolled over, exploded with such violence among the crowd of assailants, that the order to retire was reluctantly given.¹ The generous French then

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xx.
249, 250.
Jones, i.
291, 292.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 13,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
12, 13. Nap.
iv. 190, 192.

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listened to the cries of the British wounded who had been left in the ditch, and desiring them to raise their scaling-ladders, themselves helped them into the fort, where they were kindly treated—an admirable instance of humanity at such a moment, but by no means singular on either side in the contest of these truly brave nations throughout the whole Peninsular war.

54.
Measures of
Napoleon to
raise the
siege.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

Though the British army had lost four hundred men—since they sat down the second time before Badajoz, and a few days more would unquestionably have put them in possession of that fortress, yet it had now become no longer possible to continue the siege. Napoleon, who fully concurred in Wellington's opinion as to the vast importance of this stronghold upon the issue of the campaign, had early in May sent positive orders to Marmont to collect his forces, and co-operate with Soult in the most vigorous manner for its deliverance; and for this object reinforcements had been poured into the armies on the Portuguese frontier from all parts of Spain. Soult received four thousand men from the army of the north, and as many from that of the south; Drouet, with eight thousand men from the ninth corps, which had been dissolved, was already in march to join him; Marmont was directed to collect his forces on the Tagus, and second the operations of Soult for the relief of Badajoz; Bessières was to occupy Valladolid with ten thousand men, and push an advanced guard to Salamanca, to observe the Ciudad Rodrigo frontier: while Bonnet was to evacuate the Asturias, and take a position on the Orbigo, towards Leon, to observe the loose Spanish array which was collected on the Galician frontier.¹

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
253, 254.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 13,
1811. Belm.
i. 189, 190.

55.
His defen-
sive prepa-
rations
through the
whole of the
north of
Spain.

Nor was the anxiety of the Emperor confined merely to measures calculated to effect the deliverance of Badajoz. Defensive precautions on the most extensive scale were made, over the whole north of the Peninsula, as far back as Bayonne. Astorga was directed to be evacuated, and in part dismantled; strong works were erected around the

castle of Burgos, the importance of which he even then clearly discerned ; a *tête-de-pont* was constructed on the Ebro at Miranda, and another on the Bidassoa at Irun ; the defiles between Vitoria and Bayonne were secured by blockhouses and fortified posts ; a citadel of great strength was constructed at Santona, so as to render its peninsula impregnable, and serve as a *point d'appui* to a force sent by sea from Bayonne to operate in the rear of an advancing army ; a division under Vaendermaison crossed the Pyrenees, and was incorporated with the army of the north ; four reserve brigades were collected at Bayonne under general Monthion, the battalions composing which were sent off into Spain as fast as they arrived, and replaced in that fortress by a fresh reserve division of six thousand men. In addition to this, a new corps of reserve was formed of the divisions of Reille, Caffarelli, Souham, and the Italian division of Severole, in all forty thousand strong, to which the important duty was committed of occupying Biscay, Navarre, and the north of Old Castile, and keeping open the great line of communication with Bayonne. By these means a very great addition was made to the strength of the French armies in Spain, which, by the end of September, were raised to the enormous amount of three hundred and sixty-eight thousand men, of whom three hundred and fourteen thousand were present with the eagles—a force so prodigious as apparently to render hopeless any attempt on the part of the English to dislodge them from the country. Nor were material preparations neglected for the equipment and support of the warlike multitude. Long convoys of ammunition and military stores of all kinds were incessantly traversing the Pyrenees.¹ A million rations of biscuit were prepared in each of the towns of Bayonne, Burgos, and Valladolid ; and though last, not least, as an indication of the sense of Napoleon of the pressing necessity of arresting the English, the maxim that war should maintain war was for a while suspended, and forty millions of

¹ Belm. i. 190, 191. Napoleon to Bessières, June 8, 1811, and Caffarelli, June 11, 1811. Marmont to Napoleon, June 21, 1811. Belm. App. I. No. 76, 78.

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56.
Wellington
raises the
siege, and
retires into
Portugal.
June 10.

francs (£1,600,000) were despatched from Paris to the headquarters of the different armies.

Although this general displacement and concentration of the French armies, in consequence of the offensive movement of Wellington, had the most important effects ultimately upon the war, and afforded the clearest indication of the importance which Napoleon attached to it, as well as the judgment with which the stroke had been directed; yet, in the first instance, it of necessity compelled the retreat of the English army, and the raising of the siege of Badajoz. On the morning of the 10th, an intercepted letter from Soult to Marmont was brought to Wellington, which revealed to the English general the enemy's intention immediately to concentrate their whole force in Estremadura, and converge simultaneously to the banks of the Guadiana; while, on the same day, intelligence arrived from the frontiers of Castile, that Marmont's corps were rapidly marching for the same destination, and would be at Merida by the 15th. The united strength of these armies, with the reinforcements they had received, would have amounted to above sixty thousand men, to whom the English general could not, from the sickness of the British army, and the extraordinary diminution of the Portuguese troops—from the fatigues of the winter campaign and the inefficiency of the local government—oppose more than forty-eight thousand. In addition to this, the Portuguese authorities had allowed the stores in Elvas to run so low, that enough did not remain in its magazines for a fortnight's defence of the place, far less to answer the demands for the siege of Badajoz. Supplies there were none in Lisbon; and no means of transport existed to bring up the English ammunition from their great depot at Abrantes, as no representations on the part of Wellington could induce the regency at Lisbon to endanger their popularity, by taking any steps to draw forth the resources of the country for these necessary services.¹ In these circumstances the raising of the siege had become

¹Wellington to Lord Liverpool, June 13, 1811. Gurw. viii. 14, 15. Jones, i. 393. Vict. et Conq. xx. 253, 254.

indispensable ; and it took place, without molestation, on the 10th and 11th, the stores and heavy cannon being removed in safety to Elvas.

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It was not long before the wisdom of this retreat became apparent : for Soult and Marmont soon appeared in most formidable strength on the banks of the Guadiana. The former of these marshals, having received a part of the reinforcements destined for him, particularly those under Drouet, was strong enough to raise the siege himself, and for that purpose he broke up on the 11th from Llerena, and advanced towards Albuera, whither also Wellington repaired with the bulk of his forces, still maintaining the blockade of Badajoz, in hopes that the garrison, who were known to be in great want of provisions, would be compelled to capitulate before Marmont arrived. The English general on this occasion did not fail to occupy the hill which had been so fiercely contested on the former occasion, and the line in other places was strengthened by field-works. Soult, however, who was aware how rapidly Marmont was approaching, was too wary to be drawn into a combat with equal forces ; and he therefore kept off till the 17th, when the near approach of the army of Portugal made it indispensable for the whole allied army to raise the blockade, and retire behind the Guadiana. In effect, that marshal, who, when he set out on his march, had neither magazines nor a single horse or mule to convey his supplies, had, by the terrors of military execution, extorted the requisite provisions and means of transport out of the wretched inhabitants, who were reduced to despair ;^{1*} and setting out from Alba de Tormes on the 3d June, he had advanced,

57.
Entry of
Marmont
and Soult
into Bada-
joz.

June 17.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 20,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
36, 37.
Marmont to
Berthier,
June 21,
1811, and
Soult to
Berthier,
June 22,
1811. Belm.
i. App. No.
78, 79.

* "L'armée du Maréchal Marmont se trouvait sans magasins et sans un seul caisson ou cheval pour transporter les canons ; tous les chevaux et les mulets du train des équipages militaires ayant péri en Portugal. Elle enleva dans le pays tous les bestiaux, tous les mulets, tous les ânes, toutes les voitures, et emporta tout le blé qu'elle put ramasser. La province se trouva complètement ruinée sur un rayon immense, et les habitants furent réduits au désespoir."—BELMAS, i. 192.

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June 17.

by forced marches, through Ciudad Rodrigo and the passes of Perales and Baños to Truxillo, which he reached on the 14th. On the 17th his advanced guard was at Merida, while Soult approached to Albuera; and the British army having retired across the Guadiana, the junction of the French armies was effected on the day following, and they entered Badajoz in triumph on the 19th, at the moment when Philippon and his brave comrades, having exhausted all their means of subsistence, were preparing the means of breaking through the British lines and escaping.

58.

Wellington
takes post
on the Caya,
and offers
battle.
June 25.

A signal opportunity was now presented to the French generals for striking a great blow at the English army. By collecting their forces from all quarters, stripping the Asturias, Leon, and the two Castiles of troops, and leaving only enough in Andalusia to maintain the garrisons, they had assembled a prodigious army in front of Badajoz. Marmont brought thirty-one thousand infantry and five thousand horse, and Soult twenty-five thousand infantry and three thousand admirable horse—in all fifty-six thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry, with ninety pieces of cannon. To oppose this powerful array, Wellington, who had assembled his whole force from Beira, had only the British and Portuguese; the Spaniards who took part in the battle of Albuera having been detached under Blake to cross the Guadalquivir, and menace Seville. There were collected forty-two thousand infantry, however, and four thousand cavalry, with sixty-four pieces of cannon, round the standards of the British chief; and these were tried soldiers, who had all faced the enemy, and who had the confidence in each other which experience alone can give. Though the French superiority, especially in cavalry and artillery, was very considerable, and the plains in which the action would be fought, near the Guadiana, were eminently favourable to the action of those arms, yet Wellington justly conceived that, with nearly fifty thousand British and Por-

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¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 20,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
37, 38. Nap.
iv. 202.
Belm. i.
193, 194.
Vict. et
Cong. xx.
253, 257.

tuguese soldiers, he need not fear to give battle. Selecting, therefore, a defensive position upon the Caya, he awaited the approach of the enemy, whose cavalry crossed the Guadiana in great force, and approached to reconnoitre his position. Everything announced a great and decisive struggle; and as the French had, with infinite labour and difficulty, concentrated their forces from all quarters, from the banks of the Guadalquivir to the mountains of Asturias, and the English had no reserves to fall back upon, it was undoubtedly for the interest of the former to have brought on the fight.¹

59.
Soult and
Marmont
decline
fighting,
and with-
draw.

June 24.

²Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
June 27,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
57. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
258, 259.
Nap. iv.
201.

But at this perilous crisis it was seen of what avail the moral weight of an army is, and how completely it can compensate even the most considerable advantage, in point of numbers and equipment, in the array to which it is opposed. Though the British sabres and bayonets in the field did not exceed twenty-eight thousand, or not half of the French army, (the remainder being Portuguese,) yet these were the soldiers of Talavera and Busaco: the glory of Albuera shone around the bayonets of the right wing, the remembrance of Fuentes d'Onore added strength to the left. Despite all the advantages of their situation, and they were many—for the works of Elvas were in such a dilapidated condition that they could not have stood a week's siege, and the garrison had only ten thousand round-shot left—the French marshals recoiled before the danger of hazarding the fate of the Peninsula on a pitched battle with such an army; and after reoccupying Olivenza, which was abandoned on their approach, and reconnoitring the British position, they withdrew without fighting. Nothing occurred except a sharp cavalry action near Elvas, in which six hundred British dragoons, at first successful, were at last drawn into an ambushade by a feigned retreat of the French hussars, and defeated with the loss of a hundred and fifty men.² After remaining a few days together, the noble array of the French separated, Soult retiring by the

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way of Albuera towards Seville, and Marmont defiling towards Truxillo and the valley of the Tagus near Talavera.

60.
Operations
of Blake
and Ballas-
teros in An-
dalusia.

Wellington's principal reliance for the means of breaking up this great combined force, which threatened such dangers to Portugal in his front, was on Blake's troops, who, having separated from the British when they crossed the Guadiana on the 17th, had taken the road for Seville, now entirely denuded of defenders by the concentration of Soult's forces for the relief of Badajoz. Although the Spanish general did create a diversion on this favourable occasion in the French rear, yet he effected nothing compared to what, with more judgment and energy, might have been achieved. Having recrossed the Guadiana at Martola on the 22d, he reached Castillejos on the 24th, where he remained inactive till the 30th, as if with the express design of giving the enemy time to prepare for his approach. He then moved forward; but instead of directing the bulk of his forces on Seville, of which he might have easily made himself master, and ruined the famous foundery there, from which the French were making all their ordnance for the siege of Cadiz, he turned to the right, and wasted three days in a fruitless siege of la Niebla, a walled town and castle in the mountains, garrisoned by three hundred men. Villemur and Ballasteros, meanwhile, with a small body approached within cannon-shot of Seville, where the utmost alarm prevailed among the French depots, who took refuge, with the governor-general Daricau, in the fortified convent of la Cartusa; but Soult was by this time rapidly approaching, and the time for striking a blow had gone by. After blowing up the fortifications of Olivenza, he broke up from Badajoz on the 27th June, relieved with one of his divisions the castle of Niebla early in July, despatched another with the utmost haste to secure Seville from assault, and himself crossing the Sierra Morena by Monasterio, re-entered the Andalusian capital on the 7th.

June 30.

July 4.

July 7.

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Blake, upon the approach of the French, retired precipitately from la Niebla into Portugal, and thence descended to Ayamonte, at the mouth of the Guadiana, where he fortunately met with an English frigate and three hundred transports, which conveyed his infantry and cannon to Cadiz. Ballasteros, who with the cavalry covered the embarkation, afterwards took refuge in the adjoining island of Canelas, where he threw up intrenchments; and there he remained till August, when he embarked at Villareal, and sailed with his infantry to the mountains of Ronda, while his cavalry remounted the Guadiana, and joined Castanos, who with a small force still kept his ground in the mountains of Estremadura.^{1*}

¹ Nap. iv.
209, 211.
Tor. iv. 77.
81. Vict.
et Cong.
xx. 259,
265.

While these momentous operations were going forward on the Guadiana, a feeble attempt at renewed vigour had taken place in Granada and on the Murcian frontiers. The mountaineers of Ronda, who had never been entirely subdued, were encouraged, by the departure of the whole disposable forces in Andalusia for the banks of the Guadiana, to make an attempt against the town of Ronda, the capital of their district; and four thousand armed peasants, under the Marquis Las Cucoas, had already reduced the French garrison there, eight hundred strong, to the last extremity. Soult immediately collected four columns from Seville, Cadiz, Malaga, and Granada, with which he speedily raised the siege, and compelled the Spaniards to take refuge in their inaccessible cliffs, with the loss of some hundred men. Indefatigable in his activity, the French marshal next proceeded against the numerous but desultory array of the Murcians, who, to the number of

61.
Total rout
of the Spaniards at
Baza in
Granada.

July 5.

* A curious incident, attended with most disastrous consequences, took place in Estremadura at this period. As some of the Portuguese troops were firing a *feu-de-joie* in a corn-field in the neighbourhood of Badajoz, in dry and sultry weather, the corn took fire, and the conflagration spread with such extraordinary rapidity and violence, advancing, as it always does, towards the north-east wind, which was blowing with gentle gales, that in three days it had reached Merida, a distance of above thirty miles, which was only saved from total destruction by the ample stream of the Guadiana, which stopped the flames.—See TORENO, iv. 75.

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1811.

July 8.

twenty-four thousand men, had advanced against Granada during his absence on the north of the Sierra Morena. The Spaniards made hardly any resistance. No sooner did the advanced guard of Soult make its appearance than the whole array, which was strongly posted at Venta de Bahal in front of Baza, with a strong ravine protecting their front, took to flight and dispersed; and nothing but the unnecessary circumspection of Godinot, who was destined to cut off their retreat, saved them from total ruin. So complete, however, was their rout, that when Blake, who had been despatched from Cadiz with his troops to take the command of this numerous army, arrived, it had entirely vanished, and no force whatever remained in the field. The fugitives in great part took refuge in the city of Murcia; its intrenchments were strong; the yellow fever was raging in Carthagená at no great distance; and the French troops were so dreadfully worn out by the long marches and excessive fatigues of the campaign, that Soult refrained from undertaking the siege, and gave his wearied soldiers their long-wished-for rest amidst the smiling villages of Andalusia.¹

Aug. 4.
¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
264, 267.
Nap. iv.
211, 212.
Tor. iv.
200, 207.

62.
Rise and
rapid pro-
gress of the
insurrec-
tion in the
northern
provinces.

² *Ante*, ch.
lxvi. § 55.

Consequences far more important followed on the other extremity of this vast line of operations. The evacuation of the Asturias by Bonnet, the concentration of the French forces in Old Castile, and the commencement of defensive preparations at Burgos, on the Ebro, and even on the Bidassoa, in pursuance of the provident commands of Napoleon, which have been already mentioned,² produced an extraordinary excitement in the northern provinces. The inhabitants of these mountain regions—brave, hardy, and independent, in whom centuries of freedom had created elevation of character, and Alpine air nourished physical resolution—were universally roused by these apparently decisive indications of returning success, and with joyful steps repaired to the headquarters of the indefatigable chiefs who still, in their rocky fastnesses, maintained the standard of independence. The

intelligence of the retreat of the French from Portugal, and the battles of Fuentes d'Onore and Albuera, coupled with the defensive preparations made on so extensive a scale in all Biscay and Old Castile, induced a general belief on the frontier that the French were about to retire altogether from the Peninsula, and that a vigorous insurrection in the northern provinces would cut off their means of retreat, and effect at a stroke the entire deliverance of the Peninsula. Upon a brave people, impressed with these feelings and expectations, Mina from Navarre, Mendizabel, who had disembarked in Biscay from Asturias, and Duran and the Empecinado in the northern parts of Old Castile, found no difficulty in making a very great impression. The insurrection spread like wildfire through all the hill country. Every glen, every valley, poured forth its little horde of men; the patriot bands increased in all the principal towns; and, contrary to what had heretofore been observed, were filled with young men of the first families in the country.¹

Mendizabel, who had landed in Biscay early in June, soon found himself at the head of twelve thousand men, and from Potes, his headquarters, extended his incursions to Burgos and Vitoria; Mina was the chief of an equal force in Navarre, and sweeping the country to the very gates of Saragossa, answered the atrocious proclamations, already noticed, of Bessières² by a counter one, breathing the indignant spirit of retaliation and defiance;³ while the Empecinado and Duran in Old Castile had become so formidable that they laid siege to, and captured the important fortified town of Calatayud, though defended by five hundred men. So urgent did affairs become in the northern provinces, and so uneasy was Napoleon at the insecurity of his communications in that quarter, that the imperial guard, which had entered Spain, were halted at Vitoria, and despatched to the right and left against the insurgents; succour was drawn both from the army of Portugal and that of the centre; and the large

CHAP.
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1811.

¹ Count Bel-
liard to Ber-
thier, June
3, 1811.
Belm. i.
App. No.
72, and i.
204.

63.
Operations
of the in-
surgents
in these pro-
vinces.

² *Ante*, ch.
lxvi. § 18.
³ *Ante*, ch.
lxvi. § 19.

June 5.

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LXVI.

1811.

June 9.
June 14.
1 Belm. i.
204, 205.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
284, 285.
Bessières to
Berthier,
June 6,
1811. Belm.
i. Appendix,
No. 73.

* 64.
Napoleon's
new disposi-
tions in
Spain.
July 9.

reinforcements pouring through the Pyrenees into the Peninsula were in great part absorbed in this harassing and murderous warfare. Mina's bands were defeated on two occasions with considerable loss by these formidable antagonists, but their success availed little to the victors. The defeated corps, as in the days of Sertorius, dispersed, having previously fixed on some distant and inaccessible point of rendezvous. The French retired from the country, thinking that the insurrection was subdued; and they were apprised of their mistake by learning that their enemy had reappeared in undiminished strength in some other quarter, or cut off some post of consequence at a great distance from the scene of action.^{1*}

These threatening appearances in the north soon produced the most vigorous measures on the part of the French Emperor to secure this, which, from the commencement of the war, he had always considered as the vital point of the Peninsula. The Imperial Guard, under Dorsenne, at Burgos, who soon after replaced Bessières in the command of the army of the north, was augmented to seventeen thousand men; thirteen thousand were collected at Benavente to observe the Galicians under Santocildes, who were beginning to assume a threatening position at the mouths of their glens on that frontier; and nearly forty thousand fresh troops, chiefly old soldiers, crossed the Bidassoa and entered Spain. The great amount

* "The army of the north is composed of forty-four thousand men, it is true, but if you draw together twenty thousand, the communications are instantly lost, and the insurrection makes the greatest progress. The sea-coasts will soon be lost as far as Bilbao. We are in want of everything: in fact, it is with the utmost difficulty that we can get subsistence from day to day. The spirit of the country is frightful. The journey of the King to Paris, the retreat of the army from Portugal, its march to the Tagus, and the evacuation of the whole country, not even excluding Salamanca, have turned the heads of the people to a degree which I cannot express. The insurgents recruit and swell in all quarters with extraordinary activity. If I am obliged to adopt a decided line, you must not reckon on the communications. Vitoria, Burgos, and Valladolid are the only points which I can hold."—BESSIÈRES TO BERTHIER, *Valladolid*, 6th June 1811, No. 73; BELMAS, i. 560. See also BELLARD TO BERTHIER, *Madrid*, 3d June 1811; *Ibid.* i. 358.

of these reinforcements, joined to the narrow escape which Badajoz had just made from falling into the hands of the British, induced Napoleon to make a material change in the distribution of his troops and the duties of his commanders. Marmont—withdrawn from the plains of Leon, which his troops had rendered a perfect desert, and the protection of Ciudad Rodrigo, which was confided to Dorsenne and the army of the north—was directed to take up his cantonments in the rich and comparatively unexhausted valley of the Tagus, from whence, without neglecting that fortress, he was to consider himself principally intrusted with the defence of Badajoz. For this purpose he was to station two divisions at Truxillo, ready to succour whichever place might be first threatened ; to construct a double fortified *tête-de-pont* at Almaraz, so as to secure that valuable passage of the Tagus ; and to fortify the Puerto de Baños, so as to be master of that important pass through the mountains. For the support of his troops the whole province of Toledo was assigned to that marshal, who immediately began forming magazines from it at Talavera, to the infinite mortification of Joseph, who thus saw his principal granary and means of subsistence entirely diverted from his capital and court. Soult was enjoined to hold himself in readiness to advance with thirty thousand men to raise the siege of Badajoz, if it should be again threatened by an English army ; while Dorsenne, with the army of the north, now augmented to sixty thousand admirable troops, was intrusted with the onerous and irreconcilable duties of at once guarding the northern passes against the insurgents of Navarre and Biscay, and protecting Ciudad Rodrigo from the enterprises of the British general.¹

¹ Napoleon to Marmont, July 10, 1811. Belm. i. No. 80, Appendix, and i. 194, 195.

While Marmont was carrying these fresh instructions into execution, which he immediately did, and busily engaged in constructing at Almaraz the double forts at each end of the bridge, which were to secure the passage of the Tagus, Wellington, who constantly had an eye on

65.
Wellington's movements to the north of Portugal.

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LXVI.

1811.

July 21.
Aug. 8.
¹ Nap. iv.
224. Belm.
i. 196.

the frontier fortresses, and felt that the recovery of one or both of them was essential to the making any durable impression on the Spanish territory, made a corresponding movement to the frontiers of Beira with the bulk of his forces. Leaving Hill with ten thousand infantry, fifteen hundred horse, and four brigades of artillery, on the Estremadura frontier, at Portalegre and Villa Viciosa, he himself moved, with the remainder of his forces, about forty thousand strong, to the north of the Tagus, and marching leisurely by Castelbranco, arrived on the Coa, opposite Ciudad Rodrigo, on the 8th August.¹

66.
Defeat of
the Galici-
ans on the
Esla.
July 9.

The French general imagined that this movement was intended to co-operate with an advance which had recently taken place on the part of the Galicians under Santocildes, who had descended from their mountains into the plains of Leon, and reoccupied Astorga, when the general concentration of the imperial forces for the relief of Badajoz left the northern provinces comparatively destitute of French troops. To defeat this supposed combination, Dorsenne resolved in the first instance to drive back the Spaniards, who were threatening his right flank; and this proved a task of no difficulty. The Galicians, destitute of everything, and almost starving, had dwindled away to thirteen thousand ill-disciplined men, who were stationed behind the Esla, and at Foncebudon. Attacked in the end of August by Dorsenne with greatly superior forces, the Spaniards, after some sharp skirmishes, in which they were roughly handled by the French dragoons, were cut off from the magazines at Villa Franca and Lugo, and forced back into the mountains round the Val des Orras, on the Portuguese frontier. The alarm was excessive in Galicia; and nothing saved the whole province from falling into the hands of the invaders but the advance of Wellington to the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, which instantly checked the progress of the victorious French on the

road to Lugo, and compelled Dorsenne, who had reoccupied Astorga, in which he now left an adequate garrison, to call in his detachments from all quarters to provide for the defence of that important fortress. In his retreat from Villa Franca to Astorga, the French general entirely devastated a line of country above twenty leagues in length : a barbarous measure, and as impolitic as it was cruel, as, by the admission of their own historians, it destroyed a part of the resources of their principal army.¹

Though the march of the British from the banks of the Guadiana to those of the Coa was attended with this important collateral effect in rescuing Galicia, with its valuable harbours and naval establishments, from the grasp of the enemy, yet it was not the real object which Wellington had in view. Ostensibly undertaken to remove his troops from the sands of the Guadiana, so well known in the autumnal months to be fraught with death, to a more salubrious region, he hoped to realise from it not only increased healthiness to his ranks, but additional security to the realm intrusted to his defence. It was on Ciudad Rodrigo that his heart was fixed ; and the dispersed situation of the French armies charged with its defence, joined to the defective state of the supplies with which the garrison was furnished, inspired him with a well-grounded hope, that, by a sudden attack, it might be wrested from their hands. With this view he had, with all imaginable secrecy, prepared a powerful battering-train of iron guns at Lisbon, which, with a reinforcement of British artillerymen, recently arrived from England, were ostentatiously embarked at that harbour as if for Cadiz ; but at sea they were shifted on board small craft, which brought them first to Oporto and then to Lamego, a hundred miles from the sea-coast, near the Douro, which being one of the great depots of the army, the arrival of the carts containing them excited little attention. The operation, however, of bringing sixty-eight heavy guns,

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with all their stores complete, up sixty miles of water-carriage, and then across nearly forty more of rough mountain-roads, was one of no ordinary magnitude. Five thousand bullocks and a thousand militia were employed in transporting the train, and repairing the roads for several weeks together; and nothing but the universal and indelible hatred which the cruelty and exactions of the French in that part of Spain had excited, could have prevented the transport of this great armament from coming to their knowledge. As it was, they remained entirely ignorant of what was going forward; the guns, by vast exertions, were brought safe to the place of their destination; and Wellington had the satisfaction of thinking that, unknown to the enemy, he had secured a powerful battering-train within little more than sixty miles of Ciudad Rodrigo.¹

¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
July 18,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
111. Nap.
iv. 222, 224.
Jones, ii.
28, 31.

68.
Grounds of
hope for a
successful
enterprise
against that
fortress.

The enterprise thus undertaken by Wellington was equally bold in conception, and cautiously provided for as regarded execution. The battering-train was brought forward, still unknown to the enemy, to Villa de Ponte, only sixteen leagues in rear of the army; Don Julian Sanchez, with his guerillas, had for some time past established a blockade of the fortress; while the Allied army remained in healthy cantonments on the high grounds around Fuente Guinaldo, almost within sight of its walls, ready at a moment's notice either to commence a siege, or move forward to protect the blockade. The fortress, it was known, had only provisions for six weeks; and though the French armies of Dorsenne, Marmont, and Soult could, by concentrating, bring ninety thousand men, or nearly double his own force, to its relief, yet the hopes of Wellington were founded upon the experienced impossibility of such a force being able, from want of provisions, to keep any time together; and though they might relieve it at a particular moment, he trusted that the hour would ere long arrive when he might strike a successful blow during the time that they were still at a distance. The

army was now greatly improved in health, in the highest spirits, and in admirable order; the reinforcements recently arrived from England had raised its numerical amount to forty-eight thousand infantry, five thousand cavalry, and seventy-two guns, besides the battering-train.

Of this array, about forty-five thousand were under Wellington's own command; while the water-carriage in their rear enabled them constantly to keep together; and their central position went far, in the long run, to counterbalance the great superiority of force which, by concentrating all their armies, the enemy might bring to bear against him.¹

This concentration of the Allied force in a position which constantly menaced Ciudad Rodrigo, was attended with this further and most important advantage, that it entirely disconcerted a deep project which Napoleon had conceived at this period, and which Soult had warmly espoused, and was preparing in the south the means of carrying into execution—viz., of invading Portugal with the combined armies of Marmont and the south, and transferring the seat of war into the Alentejo. This design—which was unquestionably the true mode of attacking Portugal, as it led by the shortest road to Lisbon, and took the famous defences of Torres Vedras in rear—is to be found fully developed in a despatch by the French Emperor to Marmont, of date 18th September 1811. That marshal's force, which was estimated as likely then to amount to forty-one thousand men, was to be joined by several divisions of Soult's forces, of whom twenty thousand were still in Estremadura; and with the united force, above sixty-five thousand men, he was to besiege Elvas, and inundate the Alentejo. If Wellington, as a set-off against this irruption, moved against Salamanca and the army of the north, Dorsenne was to fall back to Valladolid, or even Burgos, where fifty thousand men would be assembled to stop his progress; if, as was deemed more probable, the English drew

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¹Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
July 18,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
111, 112.
Jones, ii.
29, 30. Nap.
iv. 219, 221.

69.
Project of
Napoleon
for invading
the Alentejo
by Soult
and Mar-
mont.

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1811.

¹ Napoleon
to Marmont,
Sept. 18,
1811. Belm.
i. App. No.
82.

towards Lisbon, and descended the valley of the Tagus, Dorsenne was to follow them with twenty-five thousand men; and in either case Elvas, it was expected, would fall, and the French armies be placed in cantonments in the Alentejo about the same time that Suchet made himself master of Valencia. This well-conceived design, which perfectly coincided with what Soult had long been contemplating, was entirely based on the supposition that "the English had no heavy artillery for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo; for if that enterprise is once undertaken, you must march at once to its relief;"—a striking proof of the important effects consequent on the admirable stratagem by which the English general had already secured that vital arm within a few days' march of the menaced fortress.¹

70.
Wellington
turns the
siege into a
blockade,
and the
French
approach
to raise
it.

Wellington, in the first instance, intended to have besieged Ciudad Rodrigo, as he conceived himself sufficiently strong to undertake that enterprise in the face of Marmont, and the succour of ten thousand men, which could alone, he conceived, be detached from the army of the north to its relief. Under this impression the preparations for the attack went on with great activity. He had not been many days, however, engaged in this undertaking, when he learned that nearly five-and-twenty thousand admirable troops were disposable around Dorsenne's standards. Upon this he changed his plan for the time to a blockade, and advanced his cavalry so as to straiten the fortress; while Almeida, in the rear, was put into a respectable posture of defence, in order to form a secure place of deposit for the battering-train, still at Villa de Ponte, in case of disaster. No sooner did the French generals receive intelligence of the danger with which the fortress was threatened, than they assembled their forces, and collected supplies for its relief. Dorsenne, with infinite difficulty, and by the most rigorous exactions, got together nine hundred waggons laden with provisions for that purpose; and bringing down the

divisions Vaendermaison and Souham from Navarre, put himself at the head of above thirty thousand soldiers to cover their entry. Marmont, at the same time, who had been strongly reinforced, and had now fifty thousand effective men around his eagles, in the valley of the Tagus, also collected a large convoy at Bejar, and advanced with a like body to form a junction with the army of the north. Their united forces, above sixty thousand strong, of whom six thousand were cavalry, with a hundred pieces of cannon, united at Tamanes, on the 21st September, and immediately advanced towards Ciudad Rodrigo, where Wellington, expecting their approach, had assembled all the forces, forty-five thousand strong, under his immediate command, to watch, and if possible prevent, their entrance.¹

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Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
Sept. 29.
1811. Nap.
iv. 229, 237.
Belm. i.
197.

Every man in both armies conceived that the decisive moment had now arrived, and that a pitched battle between these gallant antagonist hosts was now to determine the fate of the Peninsula. But the crisis passed over without any momentous occurrence: the hour of Spain's deliverance had not yet struck. Wellington was too sagacious to trust to doubtful hazard what he felt confident he would ere long accomplish by skill. Though with the noble army at his command he had no reason to dread a battle, even against the superior forces of the French marshal; yet there were many reasons which rendered it inexpedient at this time to incur the hazard an engagement on such a scale would necessarily occasion, even with the best troops. The position which he held in presence of Rodrigo was extensive, and therefore weak: the height of El Bodon in its centre, which was in front of the whole, was indeed strong, and Fuente Guinaldo had been improved by field-works; but the wings, which occupied a great extent of country, were in the plain, where the enemy's great superiority in cavalry gave him a decided advantage; and the position, with the right wing alone across the Agueda, and the centre and left

71.
Approach
of the two
armies to
Ciudad
Rodrigo,
which is re-
victualled.

CHAP.
LXVI.

1811.

Sept. 24.
¹Wellington
 to Lord
 Liverpool,
 Sept. 29,
 1811.
 Gurw. viii.
 300, 301.
 Nap. iv.
 236, 238.

behind that stream, was dangerous from the high banks which lined the sides of the river, and the sudden floods to which in autumn it was subject. The English general, too, was well aware that want of provisions must soon compel the vast array in his front to separate and return to their distant cantonments, and then he meditated a sudden attack with the heavy artillery, which, without their being aware of it, he had at hand. Still Wellington resolved to fight, if he could do so on terms at all approaching to equality; and for this purpose, without attempting to prevent the passage of the convoys, which entered on the 24th, he kept his troops on their ground, though with some hazard to the right wing, advanced beyond the river in order to compel the enemy to concentrate and show all his force, to protect the operation of throwing in the supplies.¹

72.
 Combat of
 El Bodon.
 Sept. 24.

When the French army approached the British, it was at first uncertain on which point they would direct their attack; but, after some hesitation, Montbrun, with fourteen battalions of foot and thirty-five squadrons of splendid horsemen, crossed the Agueda by the bridge of Rodrigo and adjacent fords, and, pouring rapidly along the road, soon reached the heights of EL BODON. The British, at this point of their position, were not prepared for so sudden an onset; and while Wellington sent to Guinaldo for a brigade of the 4th division, Major-general Colville, the officer in command, was directed to draw up his little force, consisting of the 5th and 77th British regiments, and the 21st Portuguese, with eight Portuguese guns and three squadrons of Alten's German dragoons, on the summit of the height, which presented a convex front towards the enemy, and was secured on either flank by deep and rugged ravines. Though Picton, who was at the village of El Bodon, with three regiments of the 3d division, made all imaginable haste to reach the scene of danger, the crisis had passed before he got up. On came Montbrun's cuirassiers like a whirlwind, in spite of the severe can-

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nonade, which tore their masses in a fearful manner, and, dividing into two bodies when they reached the front of the hill, rode up the rugged sides of the ravines with the utmost fury. Arrived there, they were only checked by the steady fire of the guns and devoted intrepidity of the German horsemen at the summit, who for three hours charged the heads of the squadrons as they ascended, and hurled them not less than twenty times, men and horses rolling over each other, back into the hollows. Montbrun, however, was resolute; his cavalry were numerous and daring; and by repeated charges and extreme gallantry they at length got a footing on the top, and captured two of the guns, cutting down the brave Portuguese at their pieces. But the 5th regiment instantly rushed forward, *though in line*, into the midst of the cavalry, and retook the guns, which quickly renewed their fire; and at the same time the 77th and the 21st Portuguese forced the horsemen down the steep on the other side. But though this phalanx of heroes thus made good their post, the advance of the enemy in the end rendered it no longer tenable. A French division was rapidly approaching the only road by which they could rejoin the remainder of the centre at Fuente Guinaldo; and, despite all the peril of the movement, Wellington ordered them to descend the hill and cross the plain, six miles broad, to Fuente Guinaldo.¹

If the observation of Plutarch be just, that it is not those actions which lead to the greatest results, so much as those in which the greatest heroism or magnanimity is displayed, which are the most important subjects of history, never was a combat more deserving of remembrance than this extraordinary action. Descending from his rugged post into the plain, Colville formed his infantry into two squares; and the German dragoons, altogether unable to withstand the enormous mass of the French cavalry in the open plain, being obliged to take shelter behind the Portuguese regiment which was first in retreat,

¹Wellington to Lord Liverpool, Sept. 29, 1811. Garw. viii. 301, 302. Nap. iv. 239, 240. Vict. et Conq. xx. 273. Lond. ii. 211. Beamish, Germ. Leg. ii. 15.

73. Heroic steadiness of Colville's brigade.

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the foot soldiers in the rear, consisting of the 5th and 77th, denuded on all sides, were instantly enveloped by a whirlwind of horse. The thundering squadrons, with their scabbards clattering against each other, rending the air with their cries, shaking the ground beneath their feet, charged with apparently resistless force on three sides of the steady square. But vain, even in the bravest hands, is in general the sabre against the bayonet, if equally firmly held. A rolling volley was heard, spreading out like a fan around the mass; the steeds recoiled as from the edge of a glowing crater; in an instant the horsemen, scorched, reeling, and dismayed, were scattered on all sides as by the explosion of a volcano; "the glitter of bayonets was seen on the edge of the smoke; and the British regiments, unscathed, came forth like the holy men from the Assyrian furnace."¹*

¹ Nap. iv.
239, 240.
Lond. ii.
213, 214.
Beamish, ii.
16. Wel-
lington to
Lord Liver-
pool, Sept.
29, 1811.
Gurw. viii.
302.

74.

Their admi-
rable retreat
when sur-
rounded by
the enemy's
horse.

Before the French could recover from this bloody repulse, Picton, who had used the utmost diligence to reach his comrades, joined the retreating squares; and the whole, uniting together, retreated in admirable order for six miles over the arid plain, till they reached the position of Fuente Guinaldo, assigned for the general rendezvous in the rear. During this march was exhibited, in the most striking manner, the extraordinary steadiness which discipline and experience had given to each of the rival bodies. The British moved in close order with their flanks to the enemy, who in great strength rode on each side, within pistol-shot. With eager glance the officers and men of both armies, during this long and anxious march, eyed each other, watching for any incident or momentary confusion which might afford an opportunity for an attack. But none such occurred; and the British reached their destination without being again charged or molested, save by the firing of six pieces of horse artillery which hung on the rear of their column, and poured in

* NAPIER, iv. 240, has the chief merit of this glowing description.

an incessant fire of round shot, grape, and canister.* Wellington now gave orders for concentrating his troops around Fuente Guinaldo. The light division was directed to retire across the Agueda and join the line, and the left, under Graham, to come up from the Azava; but Craufurd, who commanded the former, eager for fighting, only came a few miles nearer, and was still sixteen miles off. Graham was twelve; and at nightfall only fifteen thousand men were collected in front of the French army, when a general battle was confidently expected by both parties.¹

CHAP.
LXVI.

1811.

¹ Nap. iv.
241, 242.
Lond. ii.
214, 215.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
Sept. 29,
1811.
Gurw. viii.
302.

Marmont had now gained a great advantage over the English general; but he was ignorant of the inestimable prize which was almost within his grasp. On the morning of the 26th he had collected his whole army, sixty thousand strong, with one hundred and twenty guns, within cannon-shot of the British centre. Wellington's position was now most critical; for, as neither his right nor left wing had come up, he had not more than fifteen thousand men at his disposal to resist the overwhelming force of the enemy; and retreat he would not, for that would be to abandon Craufurd and the light division to destruction. He accordingly stood firm, and the troops anxiously gazed on the enemy, expecting a decisive battle. The array which Marmont drew forth was indeed splendid, and calculated to inspire the most elevated ideas of the power of the French empire. The enormous mass of cavalry, seven thousand strong, whose gallantry the Allies

75.
Imminent
danger of
the British
army at
Fuente
Guinaldo.

* "Picton, during this retreat, conducted himself with his accustomed coolness. He remained on the left flank of the column, and repeatedly cautioned the different battalions to mind the quarter-distance and the telling-off. 'Your safety,' said he, 'my credit, and the honour of the army, are at stake. All rests with you at this moment.' We had reached to within a mile of the intrenched camp, when Montbrun, impatient lest we should escape from his grasp, ordered his troopers to bring up their left shoulders, and incline towards our columns. The movement was not exactly bringing his squadron into line; but it was the next thing to it, and at this time they were within *half pistol-shot* of us. Picton took off his hat, and holding it over his eyes as a shade from the sun, looked sternly but anxiously at the French. The clatter of the horses and the clanking of the scabbards was so great when the right half squadron moved up, that

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had felt on the preceding day, stood in compact array before them ; next came different bodies of infantry and artillery, above twenty-five thousand in number, who went through various evolutions with extraordinary precision : at noon twelve battalions of the Imperial Guard stood forth in close column, and by their martial air, admirable array, and red overhanging plumes, attracted universal attention. During the whole day, horse, foot, and cannon never ceased to pour into the French camp, and everything was made ready for an attack the next morning on the British position. But Shakspeare's remark, "there is a tide in the affairs of men," was never more strikingly exemplified than on this occasion. While Marmont, in the vain confidence of irresistible strength, was thus making a useless display of his forces ; when Wellington, with two divisions only, lay before him, the precious hours, never to be recalled, passed away. Reinforcements came rapidly in to the English line ; at three o'clock the light division arrived ; and the object for which the position of Fuente Guinaldo had been held being now accomplished, a retreat was by the English general ordered in the night to a new position, much stronger, because narrower, than the former, in the rear, where the Allied army was now concentrated, between the Coa and the sources of the Agueda. The plumes of the Imperial Guard were not again seen by the British army till they waved over the fall of the empire on the field of Waterloo.¹ *

¹ Nap. iv.
241, 243.
Lond. ii.
215, 217.
Beamish, ii.
18. Gurw.
viii. 302,
303.

many thought it was the forerunner of a general charge, and some of the mounted officers called out, 'Had we not better form square?'—'No,' replied Picton; 'it is but a ruse to frighten us, but it *won't* do.' And so in effect it proved. Each battalion in its turn formed the rearguard to stop the advance of the enemy, and having given them a volley, they fell back at double quick time behind the battalion formed in their rear."—*Reminiscences of a Subaltern*, p. 182; and *PICTON'S Memoirs*, ii. 37, 39.

* When Marmont next day was informed of the slender amount of force which lay before him at Fuente Guinaldo on the 26th, and that the light division had not come up, he exclaimed—"And, Wellington, thy star too is bright!"—*NAPIER*, iv. 248.

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76.

Both armies
go into can-
tonments.

The British right wing retired by two roads on Alber-
garia and Aldea del Ponte, while the left fell back to
Bismula; and with such regularity was the retreat con-
ducted, that not only no sick or stragglers, but not even
an article of baggage, was left behind. By a strange
coincidence, but of which a more memorable instance
occurred afterwards in the Moscow retreat, the French
army at the same moment was also retiring; and for
some hours these two gallant hosts were literally march-
ing with their backs to each other! As soon as the
British retreat was discovered, the French wheeled about
and moved back in pursuit; but, before they could come
up with the English army, the new ground was taken.
A sharp action ensued at Aldea del Ponte, where a Sept. 27.
French column attacked a brigade of the 4th division,
but was quickly repulsed; and the British, assuming the
offensive, drove the enemy out of the village, which was
held till the whole army had reached its destined ground,
when the French again returned, and it was evacuated
with some loss. On the 28th, Wellington retired a Sept. 28.
league farther, to a very strong and narrow position in
front of the Coa, where he meant to give battle, even
with all the risk of fighting with a river edged by rocky
banks in his rear. As it was, however, neither the
strength nor the danger of the position was put to the
test. Marmont, who was already severely pinched for
provisions, retired towards Ciudad Rodrigo the same day,
and shortly after passed the Puerto de Baños, and
resumed his old quarters on the banks of the Tagus,
while Dorsenne retreated to Salamanca and the Douro;
and Wellington put his troops into cantonments on both
banks of the Coa, the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo being
resumed by Don Julian Sanchez and the British light
cavalry.¹

¹ Gurw. viii.
304, 305.
Nap. iv.
243, 245.
Lond. ii.
217, 227.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
19, 21.

In these brilliant actions the Allies sustained a loss of
about three hundred men; that of the French was more
than double this number, owing to the rapidity and

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1811.

77.

Courtesy
shown on
both sides
during these
operations.

precision of the fire of the infantry on their dense squadrons at El Bodon, and on the retreat to Guinaldó. The most heroic yet generous spirit animated both armies, of which an interesting instance occurred in one of the cavalry encounters. A French officer was in the act of striking at the brave Captain Felton Harvey of the 14th dragoons, when, seeing he had only one arm, he quickly let his sword fall to a salute, and passed on. Major Gordon,* who had been sent by Wellington with a flag of truce to Marmont's headquarters, was hospitably received by the French marshal, with whom he frequently dined, and often accompanied on his rides round the outposts, on which occasions the prospects of the campaign and the qualities of the troops on both sides were freely discussed. On the other hand, General Regniaud, governor of Ciudad Rodrigo, having fallen soon after into an ambuscade laid by the indefatigable Don Julian Sanchez, and being made prisoner, he became a frequent guest at Wellington's table, where he occasioned no small entertainment by the numerous anecdotes he related of the French generals and armies. Such is war between brave nations, by whom all feelings of hostility are invariably laid aside, and glide into those of peculiar courtesy, the moment the individual ceases to act in the hostile ranks.¹

Oct. 15.
¹ Nap. iv.
225, 230;
and 252,
254.

78.

Reoccupa-
tion of
Asturias by
Bonnet, and
concentra-
tion of
French
forces at
Valladolid
and Burgos.

The Allied army, which had been unhealthy during the latter period of the campaign, became doubly so when the troops went into cantonments; and they had not been at rest a fortnight before the sick had augmented to above seventeen thousand—the usual effect of the sudden cessation of active operations on men whose bilious secretions had been greatly increased by the long continuance of fatigue in warm weather, and which, now no longer exhaling in perspiration, induced fevers. The French, however, were nearly as unhealthy; and the penury of subsistence on the Portuguese frontier rendered

* Brother to the Earl of Aberdeen.

it absolutely impossible for their generals to undertake any operation of importance. Dorsenne, in the north, took advantage of this intermission of active operations on the Portuguese frontier to push Bonnet, with a strong division, into the Asturias, who without difficulty surmounted the passes of Cubillas and Ventana, which had been left unguarded by the enemy, and reoccupied Oviedo, Gihon, and all the principal posts in the country. This expedition, joined to the pressing necessity of subduing the insurrection in the northern provinces, and the dark clouds which were arising in the north, led, in December, to a fresh disposition of the imperial forces. Marmont received orders to establish his headquarters at Valladolid; Dorsenne was to retire to Burgos, and strongly occupy Biscay and Navarre; while the Imperial Guard was transferred to Burgos, where it was to hold itself in readiness to march into France: a series of arrangements which already revealed the secret views of Napoleon for a Russian campaign.¹

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1811.

Nov. 1811.
1 Gurw.
viii. 384.
Belm. i.
203, 204.
Berthier to
Joseph, Dec.
13, 1811.
Ibid. Ap-
pendix, No.
84. Lond.
ii. 225, 226.

This concluded the campaign of 1811, so far as the operations of the principal armies were concerned; but several important operations occurred with detached corps, which, like the red hue of the evening sky, already gave presage of the glorious dawn.

The first of these events was the surprise of Gerard's division at Aroyo des Molinos, on the 28th of October. When Wellington concentrated his army at Fuente Guinaldo to oppose Marmont and Dorsenne, Hill was left in the northern part of Estremadura to watch Drouet, who remained opposite to him in that country. After a variety of marches and countermarches, which led to no result, both generals having orders not to fight unless an opportunity should occur of doing so to advantage, Hill received intelligence, on the 27th October, that Gerard, with three thousand infantry and cavalry belonging to Drouet's corps, lay at Aroyo des Molinos, in such a situation as to be liable, by a sudden cross march, to a

79.
Surprise of
Gerard at
Aroyo des
Molinos.
Oct. 28.

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1811.

surprise from the English troops. That able officer instantly made his dispositions. By a forced march he reached Alcuesca, four miles from where Gerard lay, before nightfall, and passed the early part of the night in bivouac, without permitting any light to be made, or the slightest sound to escape, which might lead the French patrols to suspect his vicinity. At two in the morning he broke up, and, advancing swiftly and silently, got close to the road by which he knew the enemy would march out on the following morning, yet concealed from their view by an intervening ridge. In that position he awaited the break of day, and as soon as the gray of the dawn appeared, his column divided into two parts—the right, under General Howard, moving by a wide circuit into the rear of the town by which the French were to retreat, the left, under General Stewart, directly on the town from the Alcuesca road, whilst the cavalry moved between the two. The latter column was to attack first; and it was hoped that the enemy, dislodged by a sudden attack from the town, would be completely destroyed by falling into the hands of Howard's men on their line of retreat.¹

¹ Jones, ii.
39, 41. Nap.
iv. 321, 322.
Hill's Des-
patch, Oct.
30. 1811.
Gurw. viii.
372.

80.
Total defeat
of the
French.

On this occasion the British felt the benefit of that unbounded confidence and attachment with which they had inspired the Spanish peasantry; for though the whole inhabitants of Alcuesca and its vicinity knew perfectly of the arrival and the object which they had in view, not a man betrayed the secret, and Stewart's columns were within gunshot of the enemy before the latter were aware of their approach. Favoured by a thick mist and deluge of rain, the troops entered Aroyo, with drums suddenly beating and loud cheers. The 71st and 92d regiments, both Highland, led the attack in the town; and they entered with the bagpipe at their head playing the celebrated Jacobite air, "Hey, Johnnie Cope, are you waking yet?" in allusion to the well-known incident of that commander, in the conflict with the Highlanders under the

Pretender, at Prestonpans in 1745. So unexpected was the onset, that the cavalry pickets were overwhelmed before they had time to mount; and the infantry, who were under arms, beginning to muster, were so confounded that, after a desultory struggle, they fled precipitately out of the town, leaving a great many of their number prisoners. Once outside, however, they formed two squares, and endeavoured to resist; but while a brisk firing was going on between their rear and Stewart's men pressing on in pursuit, Howard's column suddenly appeared directly in their rear on the great road to Truxillo, and no alternative remained but to surrender, or break and seek safety by climbing the steep and rugged sides of the Sierra on their flank. Gerard,* however, who was a gallant as well as a skilful officer, though surprised on this occasion, for some time made a brave resistance; but seeing his guns taken by the 15th dragoons, and his hussars dispersed with great slaughter by the 9th dragoons and German hussars, he became aware that his situation was desperate, and gave the word to disperse. Instantly the squares broke, and all the men, throwing away their arms, ran with their utmost speed towards the most rugged and inaccessible parts of the Sierra. Swiftly as they fled, however, the British pursued as quickly; the Highlanders, at home among the rocks and scaurs, secured prisoners at every step; the 28th and 34th followed rapidly on the footsteps of the flying mass; the 39th turned them by the Truxillo road; and Gerard himself, after displaying the greatest intrepidity, only escaped by throwing himself into rugged cliffs, where the British, encumbered with their arms, could not follow him. He joined Drouet, by devious mountain paths, at Orellano on the 9th November, with only six hundred followers, without arms and in woful plight, the poor remains of three thousand superb troops,¹ who were

¹ Hill's
Desp. Oct.
29, 1811.
Gurw. viii.
374, 375.
Jones, ii.
40, 41. Nap.
iv. 322, 324.
Vict. et
Conq. xx.
275, 277.

* Since Marshal Gerard, minister-at-war to Louis Philippe, who besieged and took the citadel of Antwerp in 1832.

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1811.

around his eagles at Aroyo des Molinos, and who were esteemed the best brigade in Spain. General Bron and Prince d'Aremberg, with thirteen hundred prisoners, three guns, and the whole baggage of the enemy, fell into the hands of the victors.

81.
Improve-
ment in the
health of
the British
army in
their can-
tonments.

This brilliant success, which was achieved with the loss of only seventy killed and wounded, diffused the highest satisfaction through the whole British army; and shortly after the health of the troops was materially improved, by a considerable portion of them being moved into better supplied and more comfortable quarters on the banks of the Mondego and the Douro. The sick daily diminished, the spirits of the men rose, and soon the hospitals were relieved of half their inmates. Meanwhile Wellington took none of the rest to himself which he allowed to his troops. With unwearied industry he laboured incessantly at the improvement of the transport service, which was soon put on a much more efficient footing, and in the forwarding of stores and ammunition to the front, which clearly showed that Ciudad Rodrigo was ere long to be besieged. In spite of all his vigilance, however, the enemy contrived to throw more than one convoy into that fortress, and in the end the blockade was almost abandoned, from finding that the investing force was more straitened for provisions than the invested. Wellington, however, did not care for the introduction of these supplies, as all his efforts had long been directed to besieging the place in form; for which purpose he had already prepared, with infinite pains and secrecy, a portable bridge, which was to be thrown, for the passage of the stores, over the Agueda; and had rendered the Douro navigable for boats as far up as its junction with that river, forty miles higher than they had ever yet ascended. But ere the season for striking the meditated blow arrived, new and cheering advices had arrived from the south of Spain.¹

¹ Jones, ii.
37, 39.
Lond. ii.
236, 240.

Ballasteros, after his embarkation at Ayamonte, sub-

sequent to the battle of Albuera, had landed in the south of Spain, where he had drawn several thousand recruits to his standard; but being unable to withstand the powerful force which Soult directed against him, he had more than once taken refuge under the cannon of Gibraltar. Meanwhile the English government, desirous of alighting the war thus energetically revived in the southern extremity of the Peninsula, despatched a body of two thousand men, of whom five hundred were British, who took possession of TARIFA, an ancient town situated on the most southerly extremity of Spain, nearer to the African coast than even the celebrated Pillars of Hercules, and surrounded by an old wall without wet ditch or outworks. Soult, who was well aware how narrowly the besieging force at Cadiz had escaped destruction from the combination which the Allies had brought to bear upon them at the time of the battle of Barrosa, resolved to dislodge them from this position; and the fortifications were so extremely weak that hardly any resistance was expected. Godinot, accordingly, with eight thousand men, having driven Ballasteros under the cannon of Gibraltar, received orders to turn aside and besiege this stronghold. In the march thither, however, he was so raked in traversing the road, which ran along the sea-shore, by the broadsides of the English ships of war which hung on his flank, that, after sustaining a severe loss, he abandoned the enterprise in despair, and returned to Seville; where, unable to bear the warm reproaches of Soult, who was irritated at his failure, he blew out his brains.¹

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82.

French expedition
against
Tarifa,
which fails.
Oct. 14, and
Oct. 27.1 Vict. et
Conq. xx.
271, 272.
Tor. iv. 298.
Jones, ii.
42, 43.
Nap. iv.
329, 330.

83.

Second
expedition
against, and
siege of
Tarifa.

The French marshal was not to be diverted from his design, with the importance of which he was now fully impressed, by this failure; and he now prepared an expedition against Tarifa on a larger scale, and intrusted the command to a very distinguished officer, General Laval, who approached its walls at the head of seven thousand men in the middle of December, while two other divisions of three thousand each came up, one from Cadiz, the

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1811.

Dec. 19.

Dec. 27.

¹ Nap. iv.
330, 331.
Belm. iv.
17, 31.
Jones, ii.
43, 44. Vict.
et Cong. xx.
279, 280.

84.
Defeat of
the assault,
and raising
of the siege.
Dec. 31.

other from Ronda. This formidable accumulation of force compelled Ballasteros again to take shelter in the lines of Gibraltar, and obliged Skerret, who commanded the Allied force, to await the enemy's arrival within the walls, where he had eighteen hundred British, and seven hundred Spaniards. The English engineers, with great skill, had constructed interior retrenchments on the side most likely to be assailed, so as to render the assault of the wall the least difficulty which the enemy would have to encounter. The houses adjoining the point expected to be breached were loopholed, the streets barricaded; and an old tower, which commanded the whole town, was armed with heavy artillery, at once to send a storm of grape on the assailants, and secure, if necessary, the retreat of the garrison to their ships, which lay in the bay. These precautions, though judicious, were not, however, put to the test. Laval broke ground before the place on the 19th December; and so completely were the anticipations of the British engineers realised, that the guns opened their fire exactly on the spot where they were expected to do so, and behind which the preparations had been made. The approaches were pushed with great rapidity; the battering guns, which began firing on the 27th, soon brought the old wall down; and by the 30th the breach was sixty feet wide, and of easy ascent. But the British regiments were on the ramparts, each at its proper post; the 47th and a Spanish battalion guarded the breach, the 87th and rifles were dispersed round the walls.¹

Little aware of the quality of the antagonists with whom they had to deal, a column of two thousand French commenced the assault at daylight on the 31st. Such, however, was the vigour of the fire kept up upon them from every part of the rampart where a musket or gun could be brought to bear on the mass, that it broke before reaching the wall, and the troops arrived at the foot of the breach in great disorder. Part tried to force their

way up, part glided down the bed of a stream which flowed through the town, and a few brave men reached the portcullis which debarred entrance above the waters. But the British soldiers now sent down such a crashing volley on the throng at the iron grate, and at the foot of the breach, that they dispersed to the right and left, seeking refuge under any projecting ground from the intolerable musketry. The combat continued for some time longer, the French, with their usual gallantry, keeping up a quick irregular discharge on the walls; but the ramparts streamed forth fire with such violence, and the old tower sent such a tempest of grape through their ranks, that, after sustaining a dreadful loss, they were forced to retreat, while a shout of victory, mingled with the sound of musical instruments, passed round the walls of the town. This bloody repulse suspended for some days the operations of the besiegers, who confined themselves to a cannonade; and meanwhile the rain fell in such torrents, and sickness made such ravages in their ranks, that, according to their own admission, "the total dissolution of their army was anticipated." Laval persevered some days longer against his own judgment, in obedience to the positive injunctions of Victor, and the breach was so wide from the continued fire that a fresh assault was expected; but on the 4th he raised the siege, and retreated in dreadful weather, having first drowned his powder and buried his heavy artillery. In this expedition, one of the most disastrous to their arms, on a small scale, which occurred in the whole Peninsular war, the French lost their whole cavalry and artillery horses, and about five hundred men by the sword, besides an equal number by sickness and starvation, while the total loss of the Allies did not exceed one hundred and fifty.¹

The campaign of 1811, less momentous in its issue than that which preceded it, when the great struggle of Torres Vedras was brought to a conclusion, and less brilliant in its results than the one which followed, when the decisive

¹ Belm. iv.
33, 39. Nap.
iv. 336, 338.
Jones, ii.
44, 45. Vict.
et Conq. xx.
280.

CHAP.
LXVI.

1811.

85.

General results of this campaign.

overthrow of Salamanca loosened the foundations of French power over the whole of Spain, had yet a most important influence on the deliverance of the Peninsula. It is not at once that the transition is made from disaster to success. Victory is of as slow growth, if it is to be durable, to nations, as wealth or fame to individuals. To turn the stream—to change the gales of fortune—to convert the torrent of disaster into the tide of conquest, is the real difficulty. To make the first hundred pounds often costs more to the poor aspirant after opulence than to make the next thousand. During the campaign of 1811, this first hundred was made. For the first time since the British standards appeared in Spain, something approaching an equality had been attained between the contending forces. The advantages of a central position, and of water-carriage in his rear, had counterbalanced the still decided superiority of number; and Wellington, with his sixty thousand British and Portuguese soldiers, appeared on the offensive in the midst of a hundred and fifty thousand enemies.

86.
The British, though often foiled, had gained much.

True, he had hitherto been foiled in his efforts; true, the siege of Badajoz had been raised, that of Ciudad Rodrigo prevented; the blood of Albuera had, to all appearance, streamed in vain. But, to the discerning eye which looked beyond the surface of things, these very disappointments were fraught with future hope. The British army had, throughout, taken the initiative and preserved the offensive. By slight demonstrations they had put in motion the enemy's forces in every part of Spain. The war, throughout, had been maintained in his territories, and all insult to the Portuguese frontier averted. These enterprises had been rendered abortive only by accumulating against the English army the whole of the disposable force in the south-west and north of Spain. The tide of conquest had been arrested; the consolidation of the French power prevented in other quarters by these repeated concentrations; the desola-

tion of the country precluded the possibility of such large masses continuing for any length of time together; and it was easy to see that, if circumstances should enable the British government to augment, or compel the French Emperor to diminish, their respective forces in the Peninsula, the scale would ere long turn to the other side. The balance in military as well as in political affairs generally quivers for a time before it inclines decisively to a new side. Already, to the eye of prophetic wisdom, were visible the first indications of the fall of the vast power which had so long oppressed the world; and in them more than the comet which, during the summer of 1811, unexpectedly visited the heavens, as in that which preceded the death of Cæsar, the wise might have seen the prognostics of his fall.*

But, what was still more important, this campaign was productive, to all concerned in the British army, of one advantage of more ultimate value than any which they had hitherto gained—a sense of their own deficiencies. This invaluable acquisition, of such tardy growth to nations as well as to individuals, had been forced alike upon the army, the officers, and the government, by its events. The soldiers saw that mere valour, though it might win a field, could hardly decide a campaign; that the loud murmur at retreat, which forced on the carnage of Albuera, might be drowned in blood; and that the true soldier is he who, ready to fight to the last extremity when the occasion demands, is equally patient and docile in every other duty till that season has arrived. The officers learned that war is at once a difficult science and a practical art; that minute attention to details is indispensable to its perfection; and that the bluntness of intrenching tools, the failure of supplies, or ill-regulated sallies of valour in

87.
The British government and army learned their own deficiencies in this campaign.

* “Qual colle chiome sanguinose orrende
Splender cometa suol per l'aria adusta,
Che i regni muta, e i feri morbi adduce,
Ai purpurei tiranni infausta luce.”

Ger. Lib. vii. 52.

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LXVI.

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¹ Lond. ii.
235, 236.
Gurw. viii.
222. Nap.
iv. 229, 231.

the field, may often mar the best concerted enterprises. The government felt the necessity of straining every nerve to aid their zealous general in the contest : reinforcements to a large amount arrived before the close of the campaign, though, unhappily, the uniform unhealthiness of the soldiers on first landing prevented their swelling, as might have been expected, the ranks of the army; and as much specie as could possibly be drawn together, though it was but little, was forwarded for its use.¹

88.
Salutary re-
sults thence
arising.

By the incessant efforts of Wellington every department, both in the British and Portuguese service, was put on a better footing during the campaign : the government at Lisbon were at length induced to take the requisite steps to recruit the ranks which had been so fearfully thinned by the fatigues and the sickness of the Torres Vedras campaign ; the engineer and commissariat service were essentially improved, and all that had been found wanting was obtained from England ; the transport and ordnance trains were greatly ameliorated, and the military hospitals relieved of many of those evils which had hitherto been so fatal to the lives of the soldiers. Before the close of the campaign, eighty-four thousand men stood on the rolls of the Allied army, of whom fifty-six thousand were British, and twenty-eight thousand Portuguese ; and though, from the extraordinary sickness of the troops, the number in the field never exceeded fifty-seven thousand, yet the prevailing epidemics rapidly diminished when the cool weather came on ; and everything announced that, before the next campaign opened, seventy thousand men would be present with the standards of Wellington. Finally, the provident care of their chief had materially strengthened the interior defences of the kingdom. The lines of Torres Vedras had been augmented ; new ones near Almada, on the southern bank, constructed on a gigantic scale ; and such were the preparations made at Lisbon, that the English general contemplated without anxiety an event generally thought probable,²

² Nap. iv.
229, 235.
Lond. ii.
236, 237.
Gurw. viii.
222.

and publicly announced in the French newspapers, that the Emperor himself was coming to finish the war at a blow, on the Tagus.

Though this design was announced, however, it was no part of Napoleon's intention really to put himself at the head of such an armament. His secret despatches to Joseph, now in great part published by authority of the French War Office,* reveal no trace of any such design; the great reinforcements which he poured into the country in autumn were intended only to compensate the immense losses of the Torres Vedras campaign, and to re-establish on a secure basis the interrupted communications in the northern provinces. Napoleon's real views at this period were, with more candour than he usually exhibited on such occasions, divulged in his address to the Legislative Body on June 18, 1811:—"Since 1809 the greater part of the strong places in Spain have been taken after memorable sieges, and the insurgents have been beaten in a great number of pitched battles. England has felt that the war is approaching a termination, and that intrigues and gold are no longer sufficient to nourish it: she has found herself obliged, therefore, to alter the nature of her assistance, and from an auxiliary she has become a principal. All her troops of the line have been sent to the Peninsula: English blood has at length flowed in torrents in several actions glorious to the French arms. This conflict with Carthage, which seemed as if it would be decided upon the ocean, or beyond the seas, will henceforth be carried on upon the plains of Spain. When *England shall be exhausted*—when she shall at last have felt the evils which, for twenty years, she has with so much cruelty poured upon the Continent; when half her families shall be in mourning—then shall a peal of thunder put an end to the affairs of the Peninsula, and the destinies of her armies, and avenge Europe and Asia by finishing this second Punic war."¹

89.
Napoleon's
real intentions
at this
period in
regard to the
war in Portugal.

¹ *Moniteur*,
16th June,
1811.

* See BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, vol. i. App. No. 47 to 92.

CHAP.
LXVI.

1811.

90.

His atten-
tion was
entirely
fixed on
Russia.¹ Berthier to
Marmont,Sept. 18,
1811. Belm.
i. 585, 587.

Napoleon neither contemplated nor desired anything more, at this period, than the re-establishment of the credit of his arms by the capture of Elvas, and the relief of his finances by the quartering of the army of Portugal in the hitherto untouched fields of plunder of the Alentejo.¹ It was upon Russia and the north of Europe that the whole attention of the Emperor was fixed: the war in Portugal he regarded as a useful auxiliary, which might exhaust the English resources, engross their military force, and prevent them from sending any effectual aid, either in men or money, to the decisive point on the banks of the Niemen. In this view, the balanced success of the campaign of 1811, the constant predictions of the Opposition party in England that Great Britain must finally succumb in the Peninsular struggle, and the brilliant career of Marshal Suchet in Valencia at the same period, were eminently conducive to the ultimate deliverance of Europe, by inspiring the French Emperor with the belief that all danger was now over in that quarter, or would speedily be removed by the accession of the Whigs to office on the termination of the Regency restrictions; and, consequently, that he might safely pursue the phantom of universal empire even to the edge of the snows of Russia.

CHAPTER LXVII.

REVOLUTION IN SOUTH AMERICA.

IT was the boast of the Spaniards, as it now is of the English, that the sun never set on their colonial possessions ; and in the magnificent language of the Castilian historians, their monarchs succeeded to the sovereignty of "Spain and the Indies." If the magnitude and splendour of this colonial empire be considered, these high-sounding titles will not appear the flattery of panegyric, but the voice of truth. The regions which were discovered by the genius of Columbus, which yielded to the energy of Pizarro, or were subdued by the cruelty of Cortez, constituted a world within themselves. They were more than double the size, and contained above ten times the agricultural resources, of all Europe taken together. If Spain had been worthy of, and capable of discharging its duty to, this noble colonial empire ; if its inhabitants had possessed the energy and perseverance necessary to penetrate and subdue those boundless wilds ; if its institutions had been fitted to awaken the vigour, and call forth the enterprise, requisite for the settlement of mankind in these magnificent regions ; if its religion had permitted free scope to the energies of men, and yet provided the requisite check on their vices—the empire of Spain would have been what that of Great Britain is at this time, and to the Castilian, not the Anglo-Saxon race, it would have been given to settle its descendants in half the globe.

CHAP.
LXVII.

1812.

1.

Vast extent
of the Span-
ish colonies.

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1812.

2.

Extent of
South
America.

The vast continent of South America contains 7,160,000 square miles, being nearly a fifth part of the habitable globe, which comprises 37,000,000. Three-fourths of this immense surface lie in the torrid zone, and share in the luxuriance of vegetation, and unbounded richness as regards the gifts of nature, by which that favoured portion of the globe is distinguished. It is nearly 4280 miles in length from north to south; and its greatest breadth is no less than 4000 miles. If the variety and luxuriance of its productions in those parts which are fertile, and the extraordinary richness of the soil in these tropical regions, are taken into account, it may safely be affirmed that it is capable of containing a fifth of the whole inhabitants of the globe. If it were all as well peopled as the British islands are at this time—which, considering the great extent of mountain wastes in Scotland, Ireland, and some parts of England, does not appear beyond the range of probability—it would contain above fifteen hundred million souls, or nearly twice the whole present population of the earth.^{1*}

¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
478.

3.

Great geo-
graphical
divisions of
the country.

South America, like the Italian Peninsula, though embracing a great variety of climates, territories, and vegetable productions, is divided by nature into three great districts, each of which has a totally distinct character imprinted upon it by the hand of nature, and must continue to the end of time to be inhabited by a race of men entirely differing in character, habits, and disposition, from those of the others. The western division is formed by the great chain of the Andes, which runs from north to south over the whole extent of the continent, so near in most places to the Pacific ocean, that but a narrow and broken strip of land lies between their feet and the sea-coast; and, from a distance at sea, the stupendous

* The British islands, on a surface of 122,000 square English miles, contain 27,000,000 inhabitants by the census of 1841, which is at the rate, on an average, of 221 to the square mile. That rate applied to the 7,160,000 square miles of South America, would give 1,582,360,000 inhabitants.

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LXVII.

1812.

peaks of the Cordilleras appear to rise from the glassy wave of the Pacific. This mountainous region, or rather vast irregular plateau, is in general elevated about twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, and is surmounted in its central parts by lofty chains, rising into stupendous peaks from fifteen to twenty-four thousand feet in height, surpassing any in the world, excepting those in the Himalaya range to the north of India, in elevation.¹

4.
Prodigious
rivers which
flow from
the Andes.

This prodigious barrier follows the coasts of the Pacific ocean throughout the whole of South America, from which it is rarely distant more than ten or twelve leagues. Its breadth is various in different places, but in general it is from eighty to a hundred leagues across. In its snowy summits the chief rivers of this immense continent find their perennial fountains; but for them, the waters of these streams would, for the most part, be dried up by the burning sun during the hot months, and the country be uninhabitable from excessive drought during a considerable portion of the year. The streams which descend towards the Pacific ocean rush in a headlong torrent, so violent as to be a continued rapid, from the height of twelve or sixteen thousand feet to the water's edge, often in a course not more than twenty or thirty leagues in length. Those which flow to the eastward, descend in magnificent cataracts from one tableland to another, until they reach the vast level plains which stretch away towards the Atlantic; and there, uniting together, form those noble rivers which surpass any in the world in volume of waters and length of course.²

² Malte
Brun, xi.
454, 485.
Humboldt,
Vues et
Monumens,
i. 284, 287.

The second region of South America comprehends a tract of country of equal length with the great range of the Andes, lying immediately to the eastward of it, and from two to three times as broad. It consists of immense sandy or marshy plains, for the most part perfectly flat, and intersected by three prodigious rivers, the La Plata,

5.
Second
region of the
Pampas.

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1812.

the Amazons, and the Orinoco, originally descending from the snowy summits of the Andes, into which a host of others, such as the Rio Negro, Yapura, and the Yurua, convey their waters, the smallest of which, having a course of five or six hundred miles in length before they join the main streams to which they are tributary, would bear comparison with the greatest rivers of the European world. Such is the extent of those plains, that they stretch across a whole zone of the globe; and Humboldt has told us, that while one end of the Pampas of Buenos Ayres is charged with the snows of the antarctic circle, the other is overshadowed by the palm-trees of the tropics. Their aspect is peculiar, and inexpressibly striking. Rivalling the ocean in extent and level, the declivity by which the rivers intersecting them flow is so slight that it is in general imperceptible; and a gentle movement of the waters towards the east, alone informs the traveller that the inclination of the continent lies in that direction. Yet even this level expanse has a charm peculiar to itself. In those immense plains, where not a stone or a bush intervenes for hundreds of miles to break the uniformity of the scene, a feeling of sublimity steals over the mind; the nothingness of the individual is felt, as on the boundless surface of the ocean, even by the most inconsiderate. Without any landmark to direct their steps, the stars, as to mariners at sea, form the only guide of the natives; new constellations, unseen in northern latitudes, of unequalled brilliancy, attract the admiration of the European traveller, one of which closely resembles the symbol of the Christian faith; and when reposing at night under the star-bespangled canopy of heaven, he is roused from slumber, and warned to prepare for the fatigues of the following day, by the exclamation from his guide, "Midnight is past: the Cross begins to bend!"¹*

¹ Humboldt, vi. 66.
Malte Brun, xi. 480, 486.

* It is one of the most extraordinary circumstances in the whole history of literature, that this brilliant constellation, visible only from the southern hemi-

The third great region of South America comprises an elevated plateau, intersected with ridges of mountains, lying to the eastward of the Pampas, and between them and the Atlantic ocean. It is less considerable, both in point of length and elevation, than the great chain of the Andes, and does not extend over every part of the continent; but where it exists it forms a mass of lofty plateaus, the higher peaks of which are not inferior to the Pyrenees and Apennines in elevation. Nearly the whole of this eastern mountainous range is embraced in the vast Portuguese dominions of Brazil; the two other regions lie almost exclusively in the Spanish portion of the continent. The Portuguese plateau may be called the temperate zone of South America. Circumstanced midway between the shivering elevation of the Andes and the burning sun of Guiana and Columbia, it brings to maturity in its higher regions the fruits of European, in its sunny valleys the productions of tropical growth.¹ Inconsiderable when compared with the other two, this eastern plateau is yet twice as large as the Spanish

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1812.

6.

Third re-
gion, the
Plateau of
Brazil.¹ Malte
Brun, xi.
479.

sphere, was distinctly foretold by Dante above two hundred years before the Line was crossed by the European.

“Io mi volsi a man destra e posi mente
All’ altro polo, e vidi quattro stello
Non viste mai fuor ch’ alla prima gente.

* * * *

O settentrional vedovo sito,
Poi che privato se’ di mirar quelle!”

DANTE, *Purg.* l. 22.

Humbolt, indeed, has shown that, in the time of the Ptolemies, the southern cross formed by those four stars was visible from the southern parts of Libya, adjoining the Sahara desert; and a rumour of this, he conceives, had reached Dante: but this will hardly explain his allusion to it as visible from the *other pole*. Perhaps it was a tradition from the Phenicians, who circumnavigated the Cape of Good Hope, as they unquestionably did, long before the Christian era.—See HUMBOLDT, *Examen Critique*, iv. 323—a work of vast genius and research. The ancients seemed to have a presentiment of the same great discovery,—

“Venient annis secula seris,
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
Tethysque novas detegat orbes,
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.”

HORACE.

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LXVII.

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peninsula, and three times the size of the whole British islands—on so vast a scale does nature appear in these magnificent regions, and so boundless is the reserve which her wisdom has prepared, to be opened at the appointed season, for the overflowing numbers of the Old World.

7.
Its great
rivers.—The
Amazons.

The most remarkable feature in South America, next to the stupendous range of the Andes, is its rivers. In the foremost rank is to be placed the superb river of the Amazons. This noble stream, which far exceeds in magnitude the largest rivers in the Old World, takes its rise from two sources, the one of which is found in the glaciers of Lauricocha, one of the loftiest of the Cordillera range—the second in the snowy summit of Mount Cailloma, in the same lofty chain. Swelled by the tributary streams of the Yapura and the Rio Negro on the left bank, and by the Madeira, the Yavari, the Yutay, and the Yurua, the Mugua, the Rio de los Capanachuas, and the Pachira, on the right, it flows for a long period through mountain gorges of prodigious depth and surpassing beauty. After emerging from the Andes, it winds in a lazy current through the immense savannahs of South America, and does not reach the ocean till it has run a course of three hundred and fifteen leagues after its junction with the Rio Negro. Its entire course, including its windings, extends over above four thousand miles. Its breadth after it emerges into the plain is generally from two to three miles, and its depth seldom less than eighty fathoms. After its junction with the Xouga, however, its expanse becomes so great, that in mid-channel the opposite coasts can hardly be seen, and it flows in a vast estuary, so level that traces of the tide are perceived at the distance of two hundred and fifty leagues from the sea-coast. A vehement struggle ensues at its mouth between the river flowing down and the tide running up; twice every day they dispute the pre-eminence, and animals equally with men withdraw from the terrible conflict. In the shock of the enormous masses of water, a ridge of surf and foam

is often raised to the height of a hundred and eighty feet ; the islands in the neighbourhood are shaken by the strife ; the fishers, the boatmen, and the alligators, withdraw trembling from the shock. At spring-tides, such is the vehemence of this collision, that the opposite waves precipitate themselves on each other like hostile armies ; the shores are covered to a great distance on either side with volumes of foam ; huge rocks, whirled about like barks, are tossed up to the surface ; and the awful roar, re-echoed from island to island, gives the first warning to the far-distant mariner that he is approaching the shores of South America.¹*

¹ Riccioli,
Geog. x.
cvii. Malte-
Brun, ii.
227, and xi.
480, 481.
La Conda-
mine, 173.

The second great river of South America is the Rio de la Plata, which, like the river of the Amazons, takes its rise in the Andes, and is formed by the confluence of several streams descending from their snowy summits. Of these, the Parana is the most considerable. This great river, after wandering long through the mountains, issues from their gorges by the cataract of Parana—a fearful rapid twelve leagues in length, near the town of Guayra, where the descending torrent forces its headlong course with incredible violence through walls of rock, often overhanging, of stupendous elevation. Arrived in the great plains, the Parana is swelled by the waters of the Paraguay, one of the tributary streams of which, the Pilcomayo, descends from the neighbourhood of Potosi, and affords the means of water communication to the celebrated silver mines at that place.† It is afterwards augmented in its course by the Vermigo and Solado,

8.
The Rio de
la Plata.

* “——Jam flumina cuncta
Condidit una palus, vastaque voragine mersit.
Absorpsit penitus rupes, et tecta ferarum
Detulit, atque ipsas hausit : subitisque frementes
Vorticibus contorsit aquas, et reppulit æstus
Fortior Oceani.”

LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, iv. 98.

† “Così scendendo dal natio suo monte
Non empie umile il Po l'angusta sponda ;
Ma sempre più, quanto è più lunge al fonte,
Di nove forze insuperbito abbon-
da.”

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² Malte-
Brun, xi.
481, 482.
Humboldt,
Tableaux,
de la Na-
ture, ii. 175.

charged with the melted snows of the Cordilleras, and by the broad waves of the Uruguay, which descend from the mountains of Brazil. The junction of all these rivers forms the majestic Rio de la Plata, which equals the river of the Amazons in breadth and volume of waters, but is inferior to it in length; its mouth, which is nearly of the size of the British Channel, is to be regarded rather as an arm of the sea than the estuary even of one of the largest rivers in existence.¹

9.
The Orin-
oco.

The third great river of this immense continent is the Orinoco, which, though far exceeding any in Europe in magnitude, is inferior to the two others. It takes its rise in the lake of Ipava, situated only five degrees to the south of the line, in a branch of the Andes; and, after traversing the vast lake or permanent swamp of Parima, and receiving the tributary waters of the Guyavari and other great streams, it pursues its lazy course through dark overhanging forests, charged with the humidity, and abounding with the luxuriant vegetation of tropical climates, by a course fourteen hundred miles long, to the sea. Though its length is thus not a third that of the Amazons, yet it receives such a prodigious accession of waters in those shady forests, into which even the burning sun of the tropics can hardly penetrate, and where three times the rain usual in Britain falls annually,* that it discharges an immense volume of water, hardly inferior to either of its gigantic rivals, into the ocean. So vast is its extent, that the mouth of the Orinoco resembles a shoreless lake rather than the estuary of a river; and it is with great difficulty that ships, even with the aid of a strong east wind, can make good the entrance. Huge

Sovra i rotti confini alza la fronte
Di tauro, e vincitor d'intorno inonda,
E con più corna Adria respinge, e pare
Che guerra porti e non tributo al mare."

Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* ix. 46.

* The average fall of rain on the east coast of England is twenty-four inches a-year; on the banks of the Orinoco it is seventy-two inches.

detached cliffs, the remains of an old rocky barrier broken through by the current, which once joined the island of Trinidad to the opposite coast of Parima, start up here and there in this water, as if to furnish a perpetual memorial of the magnitude of the force which had swept the intermediate parts away. There is little struggle here, as at the mouth of the river of the Amazons, between the tide and the stream: the ocean appears to receive with complacency its magnificent tributary; and far beyond sight of the shore its waves are parted by the white waters of the river, which, clearly defined, strangely contrast with the deep blue hue of the sea.* It was upon entering into this vast unmixed current, that Columbus, while yet far from the mainland, became convinced he was approaching a great continent. His sagacious mind at once perceived that so immense a volume of fresh water could have been collected only on an extensive surface of land; while his ardent imagination, fraught with oriental imagery, thought he perceived in the serenity of the air, the clearness of the firmament, and the embalmed breezes which, even at that distance, were wafted from its flowery shores, unequivocal marks of his approach to Paradise, from which the four great rivers of the earth took their course.¹

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1 Herrera,
His. de las
Indias Oc-
cidentales.
Dec. 1, lib.
3, c. 12.
Malte-Brun,
xi. 483.

Between the third and fourth degrees of latitude the Orinoco separates not only the great forest of Parima from the naked savannahs of the Apure, the Meta, and the Guyavari, which stretch away without intermission to the snows of the antarctic circle, but it forms the limit also between two hordes of men of entirely different character, disposition, and habits. On the south-west

10.
Opposite
character of
the natives
on the two
sides of the
Orinoco.

* "Biancheggian l'acque di canute spume,
E rotte dietro mormorar le senti.
Ecco giungono omai là dove il fiume
Queta in letto maggior l'onde correnti;
E nell'ampie voragini del mare
Disperso, o divien nulla, o nulla appare."

TASSO, *Ger. Lib.* xv. 8.

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wander, amidst plains destitute of trees, and savannahs stretching as far as the waters of the Atlantic, savage tribes, indolent in their habits, dirty in their persons, ferocious in their disposition, but energetic in their desires, glorying in their independence, capable of extraordinary occasional effort. They are the nomads of South America; and in them is now to be found the germ of those pastoral nations which, in every age of the world, have exercised so important an influence on the fortunes of the species. Mounted on the hardy and active steeds which, first introduced by their Spanish conquerors, and descended from the Andalusian stock, have multiplied to an incredible extent in the Pampas of the New World, they wander at will over the prodigious tract of open pastures which stretch from the banks of the Orinoco to the frontiers of Patagonia. To the north-east of that river, and amidst the streams which are nourished under the shades of its impervious forests, are to be found tribes of a totally different character. Mild, tranquil, easy of government, inclined to industry, they readily embrace the discipline of the missionaries, and engage without reluctance in the labours of agriculture. The language of those opposite tribes is as much opposed in character as their habits, or the physical objects with which they are surrounded. On the savannahs it is energetic, rough, and impassioned; in the forests it is soft, melodious, and abounding in circumlocutions. So clearly has nature, in all parts of the world, imprinted the same opposite characters upon the sojourners in the fields and the shepherds in the plains.¹

¹ Humboldt,
vii. 17, 18.

11.

Magnificent
scene in the
cataracts of
the Orinoco.

The scenery in the tropical regions of the New World is so essentially different from what is to be met with in any part of Europe, that it is hardly possible to those who have not seen it to convey any conception of its beauty. The view from the rock of Marimi of the rapids of the Orinoco, is one of the most striking, and has been thus described by the hand of a master:—"When we

arrived," says Humboldt, "at the top of the cliff, the first object which caught our eye was a sheet of foam, a mile in extent. Enormous masses of dark rock, of an iron hue, started up here and there out of its snowy surface. Some resembled huge basaltic cliffs resting on each other; others, castles in ruins, with detached towers and fortalices guarding their approach. Their sombre colour formed a contrast with the dazzling whiteness of the foam. Every rock, every island, is covered with flourishing trees, the foliage of which is often united above the foaming gulf by creepers hanging in festoons from their opposite branches. The base of these rocks and islands, as far as the eye can reach, is lost in the volumes of white smoke which boil above the surface of the river; but above these snowy clouds, noble palms, from eighty to a hundred feet in height, rise aloft, stretching their summits of dazzling green towards the clear azure of heaven. With the changes of the day, these rocks and palm-trees are alternately illuminated by the brightest sunshine, or projected in deep shadow on the surrounding surge. Never does a breath of wind agitate the foliage, never a cloud obscure the vault of heaven. A dazzling light is ever shed through the air, over the earth enamelled with the loveliest flowers, over the foaming stream stretching as far as the eye can reach. The spray glittering in the sunbeam forms a thousand rainbows, ever changing, yet ever bright, beneath whose arches islands of flowers, rivalling the very hues of heaven, flourish in perpetual bloom. There is nothing austere or sombre as in northern climates, even in this scene of elemental strife; tranquillity and repose seem to sleep on the very edge of the abyss of waters. Neither time, nor the sight of the Cordilleras, nor a long abode in the charming valleys of Mexico, have been able to efface from my recollection the impression made by these cataracts. When I read the descriptions of similar scenes in the East, my mind sees again in clear vision the sea

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¹Humboldt,
vii. 171,
172.

of foam, the islands of flowers, the palm-trees surmounting the snowy vapours. Such recollections, like the memory of the sublimest works of poetry and the arts, leave an impression which is never to be effaced, and which, through the whole of life, is associated with every sentiment of the grand and the beautiful.”¹

12.
Scenes in
the forests
of the
Orinoco.

Hardly inferior to this magnificent scene, though of a very different character, is the aspect of the great forests through which in part of its course the Orinoco flows. Vast level plains are there covered with trees, which, rising to a hundred and eighty or two hundred feet in height, overshadow the humid surface of the earth. Round their base clusters a stratum of underwood, so dense that the paths which wild animals have made through its thickets resemble arches cut out of rock, rather than passages through a leafy wilderness. Creepers of various kinds, and bearing in general splendid blossoms, surmount this thicket, and sometimes reach the summits of the loftiest trees. Nor are these dark retreats destitute of inhabitants : on the contrary, animal life swarms there with a prodigality equal to that of vegetable. Alligators are so frequent on the shores of the river, and its tributary streams, that for a distance of several hundred miles the traveller has hardly ever less than five or six of them in sight at the same time. Parrots of various species and brilliant plumage ; birds innumerable, from the scarlet flamingo to the tiny humming-bird, nestle in every branch ; while the thickets swarm with wild animals in such prodigious numbers, that it appears hardly conceivable how they can all find subsistence. Tigers, jaguars, tapirs, monkeys, wild-boars, deer, besides smaller quadrupeds, abound in every direction ; and by a peculiarity very remarkable, and unknown elsewhere, they all begin at the same hour of the night to raise their respective cries, and fill the forest with a chorus so loud and dissonant that sleep is for hours impossible to the wearied traveller. So universal and well known is this custom, that the monks,

in their journeys on the shores of the Orinoco, before lying down, pray "for a quiet night and rest as other mortals." It is not without design that this prodigious exuberance of animal and vegetable life is found in the dark forests of the Orinoco. By the remains of their mingled debris, which accumulate for centuries in undisturbed repose beneath the leafy canopy and in a humid soil, a deep alluvial mould of the richest quality is formed: every successive year adds a few inches to the fertile deposit; and in the scene of present solitude, in depths now pierced only by the cries of the forest, are preparing, by an unseen hand, the means of happiness and the voice of praise.¹

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¹Humboldt,
vi. 221, 223.

The savannahs of South America are sometimes called meadows or *prairies*; but this name is not properly applicable to pastures, which are often extremely dry, though covered with grass four or five feet in height. They are true steppes—differing from those of the Old World only in the remarkable circumstance, that great part of them are situated in the torrid zone, and subject to the most vehement action of the sun's rays; while those of Asia are all on elevated plateaus, and in temperate or frigid latitudes. On this account the immense plains between the Orinoco and the Amazons river, which are little raised above the level of the sea, would be in great part uninhabitable, and in fact a blowing desert, like the Sahara of Africa, were it not for the extraordinary flat surface which they present, and which renders the most part of them liable to be periodically overflowed by the waters of these immense rivers and their tributary streams. So dead, indeed, is the flat between the Orinoco and the river of the Amazons, that it has now been ascertained, by undoubted evidence, that their waters communicate with each other; for M. Humboldt actually sailed, on an inland branch called the Casiquari, from the Rio Negro, a tributary of the Amazons, to the Orinoco. The same communication exists in other

13.
The Pam-
pas.

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¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
484, 485.
Humboldt,
vi. 44, 47.

lesser branches of both rivers. Thus nature has provided, in the flat surface of these immense steppes, and the gigantic barrier of snow which lies behind them, as in the deltas of Egypt, the means of perpetual irrigation and perennial fertility. The reservoirs exist in exhaustless numbers in the snows of the Andes ; the great arteries of the system are already formed by the level rivers ; nothing is wanting but the steady hand of laborious industry to conduct the little rills, as in Lombardy or Mesopotamia, to the meadows and gardens of civilised man.¹

14.
Their sin-
gular aspect.

During the rainy season the Pampas exhibit a beautiful verdure ; but when the great droughts succeed, they assume the appearance of a desert in those places which are elevated, even by a few inches, above the level of the inundation of the rivers. The grass then disappears ; the earth becomes reduced to dust ; huge crevices yawn in its parched surface ; the crocodiles and the large serpents lie buried in the dried mud, where they remain torpid till the first waters of spring waken them from their long slumber. These phenomena are exhibited in all those portions of the Llanos where the soil is not traversed by rivers ; but where this is the case, and on the edge of the brooks or lakes where the traveller meets with water, he finds, even during the season of most extreme drought, herbage and wild bushes surmounted by the palm, the branches of which, spreading out like a fan, cast a steady shadow on the sand at its feet.²

² Humboldt,
vii. 44, 45.

15.
Enormous
extent of the
Savannahs.

The greater part of these immense savannahs are not elevated more than two or three hundred feet above the level of the sea ; and this declivity, diffused over a distance of a thousand or twelve hundred miles, renders it almost insensible at any one place. Often in a space of a thousand square miles, there is not an eminence a foot high. If a wave fifty fathoms in height were to rise from the sea at the mouth of the Orinoco, it would break upon the foot of the Andes, eight hundred miles distant. In

consequence, the least east wind, or any considerable flood in the rivers, makes their waters regorge and overspread a vast extent of level ground, which immediately becomes covered with the richest herbage. So flat is the surface • thus flooded, that it is reached at once by the inundations of the Orinoco and the Amazons ; and, in the expressive language of the natives, the subsiding waters “do not know which way to run.” In consequence, the earth, even when the surface is perfectly dry, is, at the depth of a few feet, saturated with moisture ; and everywhere in the Llanos, at the depth of ten feet, fine and abundant springs are to be met with, flowing in a stratum of red conglomerate. One of these vast plains—that lying between the mouths of the Orinoco and the town of Araura, and from San Carlos to the savannahs of Caqueta—is one hundred and eighty leagues long by two hundred broad, and contains seventeen thousand square leagues, about the area of France. Another across the Pampas of Buenos Ayres to the foot of the Andes, is three hundred and eighty leagues broad—as far as from London to Genoa ; and above six hundred leagues long—a distance as great as from London to Naples. These plains in all contain two hundred and twenty thousand square marine leagues, or one million seven hundred and sixty thousand square miles. Vast as is this extent, the uniformity of their surface, varied only here and there in the northern parts by a solitary palm, the waving of the long herbage before the wind, like the surges of the sea, and the unchanging aspect of the horizon, round as a girdle, which appears constantly to recede from the traveller, make them appear larger even than they are, and produce on the mind a mingled impression of sublimity and melancholy.¹

¹Humboldt,
vi. 44, 46,
51. Malte-
Brun, xi.
484, 494.

If these American steppes had possessed an animal adequate to yielding milk for human sustenance, and another capable of sustaining man, they would have become,

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16.

Extraordi-
nary effect
of the want
of the horse
and cow in
America,
anterior to
the Spanish
invasion.

even anterior to the Spanish invasion, the abode of great and powerful wandering nations, who would have multiplied as rapidly as the herds in their native wilds, and exercised as powerful an influence on the character of the species, and the fortunes of the empires which arose to greatness in the New World, as the Tartars have done in every age in the old. But the want of any such companions to man entirely prevented this result, and rendered the history of civilisation wholly different in America from what it has been in Europe and Asia. Anterior to the Spanish invasion, no animal capable of nourishing the human species, like the cow, or of conveying them from place to place, like the horse or the camel, existed in the New World; the strongest beast of burden they possessed, the lama of Peru, was wholly unequal to the fatigues, and unfit for the wants, of a wandering life. Thence the total want, in every period of the native history of America, of that great family of mankind, the *nomad tribes*. Had they possessed such auxiliaries—had the countless herds of cattle and troops of horses which now wander over these boundless wilds, always existed to feed the numbers, and triple the strength of man in his native solitudes, the empires of New Grenada and Peru would have been repeatedly overturned, like those of the Assyrians and Medes, by the arms of the shepherd kings. The energy of the desert would have been engrafted on the riches of civilisation; the feeble and debasing government of a false theocracy would have been supplanted by the energetic spirit of roving independence; and when the Spaniards appeared on their coasts, instead of a meek race, who tendered their necks to the yoke and their riches to the ravisher, they would have encountered the lances of freemen, who would have equalled them in valour, and speedily hurled them back into the waves. It was not without a deep prophetic insight into the history of the species, that the dog and the horse were made the com-

panions, cattle and sheep the attendants of man. But for these he never could have emerged from his native seats : and the iron race of Japhet itself, instead of, in obedience to the Divine precept, overspreading the earth, and subduing it, would have been wandering in impotent barbarism amidst the mountains of the Caucasus.¹

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¹ Humboldt,
vi. 69, 72.

These immense savannahs of South America run down the centre of the continent, and in the basin of the river of the Amazons, from the sea to the Andes. But in the centre of the country, midway between the waters of that stupendous stream, and those of the Rio de la Plata, a prodigious tract of country is to be found, partly in the Brazilian, partly in the Spanish territory, which is entirely covered with forests. More than half the feeders of those gigantic rivers take their rise in this immense woody region ; it is amidst its deep solitudes, and under the shadow of its impenetrable boughs, that great part of their everlasting fountains are found. This tract of forest overspreads both mountain and plain ; in some places it covers rocky ranges as lofty as the Pyrenees, in other level plains as uniform as Lombardy, and extends from 18° south latitude to 8° north. The area it contains embraces no less than a hundred and twenty thousand square leagues, or nine hundred and sixty thousand square miles, more than six times the area of France, and nearly equal to the whole peninsula of Hindostan south of the Himalaya mountains*—on so vast a scale is the reserve of nature outspread in the New World. Ample provision for the increase of man is already made in these forests ; there is not one tree in a hundred of the palm tribe, which constitutes a large proportion of the woods, which does not bear fruit adapted for his sustenance.†

17.
Vast forest
region of
Central
America.

* India in all contains 1,287,000 square miles ; the British dominions in it are 512,000 square miles.—*Commons' Report*, 11th Oct. 1831 ; ELPHINSTONE'S *India*, i. 5.

† "Sur des millions de troncs de palmiers surchargés de fruit en forme d'olive, nous en trouvâmes à peu près un centième sans fruit."—HUMBOLDT, ix. 89.

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This immense region is for the most part uninhabited ; no other roads are known through its depths but the beds of rivers ; and the knowledge of the European concerning it is limited to the immediate vicinity of its principal streams. At distant intervals only, the perseverance of the Indians with difficulty finds a path through its umbrageous thickets. Impervious to savage, the whole of this region is yet destined to yield to the efforts of civilised man. Steam navigation will ascend its innumerable streams ; laborious industry will find ample recompense in its virgin mould ; and on the theatre of present solitude will one day appear the abodes, the virtues, and the vices of civilised man.¹

¹Humboldt,
vi. 55, 57.

18.
Peculiarities of nature in the chain of the Andes.

The immense chain of the Andes traversing its whole extent near the Pacific ocean, has stamped a character upon South American nature which belongs to no other country. The peculiarity which distinguishes the regions which belong to this immense chain, are the successive plateaus, like so many huge natural terraces, which rise one above another before arriving at the great central chains, where the highest summits are to be found. Such is the elevation of some of those lofty plains, that they often exceed eight and nine, and sometimes reach twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. The lowest of these plateaus is higher than the summit of the pass of the Great St Bernard, the most elevated inhabited ground in Europe.* But such is the benignity of the climate, that at these prodigious elevations, which even in the south of Europe approach the line of perpetual snow, are to be found cities and towns, corn-fields and orchards, and all the symptoms of rural felicity. The town of Quito itself, the capital of a province of the same name, is situated on a plateau in the centre of the Andes, nine thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea. Yet there are found concentrated a numer-

* It is 7545 feet above the level of the sea.—EBEL, *Manuel du Voyageur en Suisse*, i. 178.

ous population; and the plateau contains cities with thirty, forty, and even fifty thousand inhabitants. "After living," says Humboldt, "some months on this elevated ground, you experience an extraordinary illusion. Finding yourself surrounded with pastures and corn-fields, flocks and herds, smiling orchards and golden harvests, the sheep and the lama, the fruits of Europe and those of America, you forget that you are, as it were, suspended midway between earth and heaven, and elevated to a height exceeding that of the loftiest passes by which the European traveller makes his way from France into Italy, and double that of Ben-Nevis, the highest mountain in Great Britain."¹

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¹ Humboldt, *Régions Equatoriales*, 122, 130. Malte-Brun, xi. 489, 490.

The different gradations of vegetation, as might be expected in a country where the earth rises from the torrid zone by a few steep ascents to the region of eternal congelation, form one of the most remarkable characteristics of this land of wonders. From the borders of the sea to the height of two thousand feet are to be found the magnificent palm-tree, the Musa, the Heliconia, the balms of Tolu, the large flowering jasmine, the date-tree, and all the productions of tropical climates. On the arid shores of the ocean flourish, in addition to these, the cotton-tree, the magnolia, the cactus, and the luscious fruits which ripen under the genial sun and amidst the balmy breezes of the West India islands. One only of these tropical children of nature, a species of palm,* is met with far in advance of the rest of its tribe, tossed by the winds at the height of seven and eight thousand feet above the sea in the Cordillera range. In this region, as nature exhibits the riches, so it has spread the pestilence of tropical regions. The humidity of the atmosphere, and the damp heat which is nourished amidst its intricate thickets, produce violent fevers,² which often prove extremely destruc-

19.
Different productions of the different elevations in South America.

² Malte-Brun, xi. 496, 497. Humboldt, *Rég. Equat.* 59.

* The Carosylou Andicola.—HUMBOLDT, *Tableau des Régions Equatoriales*, 59.

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tive, especially to European constitutions. But if the patient survive the first attack, a remedy is at hand ; a journey to the temperate climate of the elevated plateaus soon restores health, and the sufferer is as much revived by the gales of the Andes, as the Indian valetudinarian is by a return to Europe.

20.
The temperate zone.

Above the region of the palms commences the temperate zone. It is there that vegetation appears in its most delightful form ; luxuriant without being rank, majestic yet not impervious, it combines all that nature has given of the grand, with all that poets have figured of the beautiful. The bark-tree, which she has provided as the only effectual febrifuge in the deadly heats of the inferior region ; the cyperus and melastoma, with their superb violet blossoms ; gigantic fuschias of every possible variety, and evergreen trees of lofty stature covered with flowers, adorn that delightful zone. The turf is enamelled by never-fading flowers ; mosses of dazzling beauty, fed by the frequent rains attracted by the mountains, cover the rocks ; and the trembling branches of the mimosa, and others of the sensitive tribe, hang in graceful pendants over every declivity. Almost all the flowering shrubs which adorn our conservatories are to be found there in primeval beauty, and upon what to Europeans appears a gigantic scale : magnificent arums of many different kinds spread their ample snowy petals above the surrounding thickets ; and innumerable creepers, adorned by splendid blossoms, mount to the summits even of the highest trees, and diffuse a perennial fragrance around.¹

¹Humboldt,
Tableau des
Rég. Equat.
140, 144.
Malte-Brun,
xi. 498, 499.

21.
The higher
or frigid
zone.

The oaks and trees of Europe are not found in those parts of the Andes which lie in the torrid zone, till you arrive at the height of five thousand feet. It is there that you first begin to see the leaves fall in autumn and bud in spring, as in European climates ; below that level the foliage, as in all tropical regions, is perpetual. Nowhere are the trees so large as in this region : not unfrequently they are found of the height of a hundred and sixty or a

hundred and eighty feet ; their stems are sometimes from eight to fifteen feet across at their base, and rise a hundred feet without a single cross-branch. When so great an elevation as the plain of Quito, however, which is nine thousand five hundred and fifteen feet above the sea, is reached, they become less considerable, and not larger than those usually found in the forests of Europe. If the traveller ascends two thousand feet higher, to an elevation of eleven or twelve thousand feet, trees almost entirely disappear ; but the frequent humidity nourishes a thick covering of arbutus three or four feet high, and flowering shrubs, the blossoms of which, generally of a bright yellow, form a striking contrast to the dark evergreen foliage in which they are embedded. Still higher, at the height of thirteen thousand feet, near the summit of the Cordilleras, almost constant rains overspread the earth with a verdant and slippery coating of moss, amidst which a few stunted specimens of the melastoma still exhibit their purple blossoms. A broad zone succeeds, covered entirely with alpine plants, which, as in the mountains of Switzerland, nestle in the crevices of rocks, or push their flowers, generally of yellow or dark blue, through the now frequent snow. Higher still, grass alone is found, mingled with gray moss, which conducts the wearied traveller to the region of perpetual snow, which in those warm latitudes is general only at an elevation of fourteen thousand feet. Above that level no animated being is found except the huge condor, the largest bird that exists, which in these immense solitudes, amidst ice and clouds, has fixed its gloomy abode.^{1*}

In a country of such vast extent, embracing so many different latitudes, from the heats of the torrid to the ice of the frozen zone, and combining every variety of climate in one vicinity, from the burning swamps of Guiana to the shivering summit of the Andes peaks, a large

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¹ Humboldt,
Rég. Equat.
141, 144.
Malte-Brun,
xi. 499, 501.

22.
Extraordi-
nary fertility
of the soil
in great part
of this
country.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. lxvii., where the height of the chief mountains in the world is given.

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portion of the country is necessarily sterile and desolate. Yet such is the fertility of the soil in other places, that it may be doubted whether, on an average of the whole surface, it does not reach the productive powers of the most favoured European territory. A long line of desolation along their whole extent marks the summit of the Andes, from the Isthmus of Darien to Cape Horn; a considerable proportion of its collateral ridges is sterile in the higher districts; the mountains of Brazil, covered with forests, are in part incapable of human habitation, and vast tracts in the Pampas and Llanos, destitute of perennial water, seem chained to the pastoral state to the end of the world. But, with these exceptions, almost the whole country is susceptible of cultivation, and a considerable part is so fertile, that the rich productions of tropical climates yield an almost inconceivable amount of subsistence for the use of man.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, xi. 500, 501. Miller, i. 146.

23.
Vast productive powers of nature in South America.

Such is the fertility of the soil, and so wonderful are the productive powers of nature, that wheat in South America usually produces seventy, in some instances a hundred fold. The average of all England is only nine-fold. This prodigious increase is obtained with hardly any attention to culture, as the operation of hoeing or weeding crops is unknown, and the earth is merely scratched with a plough of the rudest construction, or with the branches of a tree. When the seed is sown, it is not even cleared of the bushes and stumps of trees which encumber it. Vegetation is exceedingly vigorous in the Pampas; and in those situations where the soil is reached by the overflowing of the streams, which embrace two-thirds of the surface, it rivals in riches the Delta of Egypt. Three days' work in the week would make the inhabitants perfectly comfortable. The mind of the traveller who surveys the boundless tracts of fertile land, which here stretch out neglected and unappropriated for thousands of miles, and recollects the multitudes who pine for employment in his own country,² the fierce contests for

² Miller, ii. 259, 336. Humboldt, iii. 29, 36, xix. 152, 252.

tracts of territory not a hundredth part the size of these, which in every age have drenched the Old World with blood, is filled with an irresistible feeling of melancholy. He learns how great is the beneficence of God, how little the animosities of men.

Locally situated in North America, MEXICO, from climate, institutions, and nation, belongs to the Spanish portion of the New World. Containing within itself the elements of a mighty empire, it seems destined, like Canada, to open for ages to come its capacious arms to receive the overflowing population of the other hemisphere. It possesses a territory of above a million of geographical square miles, thinly populated at this time by nearly eight millions of inhabitants,* showing just eight to the square mile; while in England the proportion to the same space is three hundred. The Rocky Mountains run like a huge backbone through its whole territory from north to south, rising occasionally into stupendous volcanic peaks, which in some places attain the height of sixteen and seventeen thousand feet.† These mountains, which spread their ramifications through a great portion of the country, are stored with the richest veins of gold and silver; and these minerals are in great part found, not at the shivering elevation of ten or twelve thousand feet above the sea, as in South America, but at the comparatively moderate height of three or four thousand. Vast lakes, most of which are rapidly filling up, are to found in many of the lofty valleys; and plateaus or table-lands of prodigious extent, like so many successive terraces or steps from the sea-shore to the Cordilleras,¹ give every variety of climate,

24.
Description
of Mexico.

¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
363. Balbi,
1017, 1037.

* The numbers were 7,687,000 by the census of 1841.—*American Statistical Almanac for 1841*, 267.

† The following are the heights of some of the highest in the range—

	FEET.
Grand Volcano Popocatepetl,	17,716
Pic d'Orizaba,	17,390
Sierra Nevada,	14,166
Nevada de Toluco,	14,184

—HUMBOLDT, ii. 421; and MALTE BRUN, xi. 373.

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from the warmth of the tropics to the cold of everlasting snow.

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25.

First ascent
from the
Terra Cali-
ente, or hot
region.

Nature exhibits in the different gradations of this ascent the same luxuriant and dazzling beauty as in the slopes of the Andes in South America. First, on the sea-shore, is the *terra caliente*—the hot region—the country of the vanilla, the cochineal, and the cocoa, which are there indigenous; and now, in addition to these, of the orange and the sugar-cane, which have been introduced by European industry. Here the flowers and the fruits follow one another, in an unbroken circle, through the whole year; the gales are loaded with perfumes which almost make the senses ache with their sweetness; and the groves are filled with many-coloured birds and insects, whose enamelled wings glisten like diamonds in the bright sun of the tropics. Yet the same prolific sun has here provided the usual compensation, conspicuous alike in the material as in the moral world, for extraordinary advantages. His ardent rays, which awaken into life these glories of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, call forth the pestilential *malaria*, the deadly yellow fever, and a whole train of bilious disorders unknown in the more temperate regions of the north. When the level country is passed, and the ascent of the mountains begins, more magnificent features entrance the soul of the traveller. As he toils up the steep acclivity of many days' continued journey, the Sierra Madre, girt with its dark belt of pines, stretches as a huge barrier to the north and west. To the south, in brilliant contrast, seen through the openings of the pine-clad cliffs, rises the mighty Orizaba, with his white robe of snow descending far down his sides, towering in solitary grandeur. To the east spreads out like a garden the magnificent *terra caliente*, with its gay confusion of meadows, streams, and flowering forests interspersed with Indian villages; while a faint blue line on the verge of the horizon marks the distant surface of the Gulf of Mexico.¹

¹ Prescott's
Conquest of
Mexico, i.
357, 359.

When the level surface of the great plateau of Mexico is reached, spreading out several hundred miles at the summit of the first step of the Cordilleras, the productions and aspect of nature are very different. The oak and the beech recall to the European the land of his birth. The country bears the mark of careful cultivation, and magnificent crops of maize and wheat overshadow, as in Lombardy, the prolific soil. Yet traces of the sun of the tropics still appear in this elevated region—fields and hedges of the various tribes of the cactus, with their splendid blossoms, and plantations of aloes with rich yellow clusters of flowers on their tall stems, affording at once drink and clothing for the use of man. The plants of the torrid zone are no longer to be seen ; but those which have succeeded them are still more prolific than those of northern regions. The glossy, dark-leaved banana, with its profusion of nutritious fruit, has disappeared ; but the hardy maize with its golden harvest, in all the pride of cultivation, is still the great staple of human subsistence ; while the vine, clustering round every tree, and the most delicious fruits of Europe, become indigenous in these fertile regions, convey that impression of general ease and happiness which forms the greatest of the many charms of the shores of the Mediterranean.¹

The city of MEXICO, the capital of this extraordinary and beautiful country, is built in so singular a situation, and surrounded by such extraordinary objects, that the accounts of it would pass for fabulous, if they were not authenticated by the concurring testimony of travellers of every age and nation. Placed in a level plain, surrounded by mountains which, even under a tropical sun, preserve their snowy mantle all the year round, it is seven thousand two hundred feet (English) above the level of the sea ; and yet it stands in the midst of a great lake, and can be reached only by long causeways traversing the water. These causeways, the work of the ancient native sovereigns of Mexico, were the theatre of

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26.

Character
of the great
plateau of
Mexico.¹ Prescott's
Conquest of
Mexico, i.
361, 362.

27.

Description
of the city
of Mexico.

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desperate conflicts between the Mexicans and the allied force under Cortez, in the memorable siege of the capital; and one, on which the disasters of the "*noche triste*" were experienced, has been illustrated by modern genius with all the colours of poetry.* The city, which is traversed by canals in every direction, which intersect the paved streets, contains three hundred churches, many of which are resplendent with the gold and silver which are, as it were, the natural produce of the country. Though greatly declined from its former grandeur, it still contains one hundred and eighty thousand souls, and abounds with monuments alike of ancient and modern magnificence. The waters of the lake have receded much since the time when the lances of Cortez first approached its shores, and the city in consequence no longer rises, like Venice, from a waste of waters; but still its appearance, in the midst of its splendid amphitheatre of mountains, is inexpressibly striking; and the first view of it on emerging from these mountains produces an impression on the spectator which neither time nor distance can efface.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, xi. 438, 444. Humboldt, Mexico, ii. c. 8. Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, i. 399, 401.

28. Vast agricultural riches, and capacity for population.

If great part of the country in the highest or snowy region is rocky, parched, and sterile, ample compensation is afforded in the surpassing fertility of the lower valleys of the other districts. Humboldt has told us that he was never wearied with wondering at the smallness of the portion of soil which, in Mexico and the adjoining provinces, would yield sustenance to a family for a year. The same extent of ground, which in wheat would maintain only two persons, would yield sustenance, in South America, under the banana, to fifty; though in this favoured region also, as already stated, the return of wheat is never under seventy, sometimes as much as a hundred fold.² The return, on an average, of Great Britain, it has been mentioned, is not more than nine to one. If due weight be given to these extraordinary facts, it will not appear extravagant to assert that Mexico, with a

² Humboldt, iii. 29, 36; 250, 252.

* Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. ii. 325, 344.

territory embracing seven times the whole area of France, may at some future, and possibly not remote period, contain two hundred millions of inhabitants. But notwithstanding all these advantages, it is more than doubtful whether the Spanish race is destined to perpetuate its descendants, so as to rival the Anglo-Saxon, or at least retain the sovereignty in this country. Compared with the adjoining provinces of the United States or Canada, it appears struck with a social and political palsy. Corruption pervades the higher, indolence and sensuality paralyse the lower orders. The recent successful settlement of a small body of British and American colonists in Texas, a Mexican province, their easy victory over the Mexican troops, the rapid growth of their republic, and the subsequent success of the American invaders over greatly superior bodies of their Mexican opponents, may well suggest a doubt whether priority of occupation and settlement will not in this instance, as it has done in many others, yield to the superiority of race, religion, and political character; and whether to the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon settlers is not ultimately destined the sceptre of the whole North American continent.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
363, 394.
Balbi, 1017,
1037.

Another district of South America, which belongs to the Spanish portion of that continent, both from local situation and national descent, is BRAZIL. This immense kingdom, which appears as it were carved out of the surrounding regions which had yielded to the arms of the Spaniards, and has alone hitherto maintained its monarchical institutions amidst the republics which have everywhere else sprung up in the New World, is inferior to no part of the adjoining continent, either in the variety or extent of its agricultural and mineral riches. It embraces within its ample, though as yet ill-defined limits, 1,560,000 square miles, being one-fifth of the whole surface of South America, or above ten times the area of France. This immense surface is thinly peopled by five millions of souls, being not four to the square mile; and

29.
Description
of Brazil.

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¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
649, 650.
Maude, 97,
149.

of these not more than a fourth are of European origin. Great part of the country is mountainous: one chain runs along the course of the river Paraguay, from its source to the mouth of the Jaura, and several others lie in the interior. But an immense district, a hundred leagues long and fifty broad, from the mouth of the Jaura to 22° south latitude, is so flat that it is entirely inundated during the rainy seasons, and exhibits the appearance, like the lagunæ of Venice, of an immense lake, from the surface of which the wooded mountains which adjoin it rise like enchanted islands.¹

30.
Description
of Rio Ja-
neiro, its
capital.

Diamonds and topazes, known all over the world, are found in the beds of the Brazilian rivers; and its mountains abound in valuable minerals. Its capital, Rio Janeiro, now the residence of royalty, and containing a hundred and forty thousand inhabitants, situated in the bottom of a bay, surrounded with wooded mountains of matchless beauty, exceeds even the far-famed capital of Naples in the charm of its surrounding scenery. Its vast harbour, the entrance of which is guarded by the castle of Santa Cruz, is protected from the swell of the Atlantic by numerous islands of granite, which form a natural breakwater, effectually sheltering the capacious haven within. All the fleets of Europe might lie there in safety, and ships of the line of a hundred and twenty guns touch the quay with their sides. The extraordinary beauty of the islands scattered through the bay, some consisting of bare precipitous rocks, others covered with a brilliant vegetation of orange-trees, palms, jasmines, myrtles, roses, and other flowering shrubs—some desolate as they came from the hand of nature, others adorned by stately and sumptuous edifices—render this a scene of enchantment to the mariner wearied with the mournful uniformity of the Atlantic Ocean.²

² Malte-
Brun, xi.
649, 667.
Maude's
Travels in
Brazil, 97,
149, 296.
Acunha de
Coutinho,
x. 7.

The prodigious height of the trees in the forests of this immense country, which often rise to the elevation of two hundred feet from the ground, covered in general

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31.

Vast extent
of its agri-
cultural
riches.

with flowering creepers or blossoms of splendid beauty, give a peculiar and extraordinary charm to its vast uninhabited thickets; and nowhere are so strongly verified the words of Scripture, that the "desert blossoms like the rose." So immense is the size of some of these trees, and the straightness of their stems, that it is not unusual to see a canoe, impelled by twenty rowers, and containing six hundred casks of sugar, hollowed out of a single trunk. Indian corn here, as elsewhere in South America, constitutes the principal food of man; but rice, wheat, and all the grains of temperate regions, flourish in abundance; banana and sugar, cotton and coffee, grow in luxuriance in the lower regions, and furnish, in proportion to the extent of ground they occupy, an extraordinary amount of produce; the numerous palm-trees with which the forests abound are covered with fruits, some of which produce a rich substance like butter, which fills the dairy; and on the first slopes of the hills, oranges, citrons, grapes, pine-apples, pomegranates, and all the choicest fruits of Europe, ripen in perfection. Were Brazil as well peopled as France, it would contain three hundred and twenty millions of inhabitants, or sixty millions more than all Europe west of the Ural mountains at this time; and, notwithstanding the great amount of this population, such are the agricultural resources of the country, that there can be no doubt it is much less than could be maintained in comfort on its territory.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
660, 669.
La Conda-
mine, voyage
à la Rivière
des Ama-
zons, 91.
America
Portuguesa,
i. l. No. 58,
59.

To complete the picture of this interesting portion of the globe, it only remains to give a sketch of its southern extremity, where it terminates in the peninsula of PATAGONIA. The close proximity of this vast region to the antarctic circle renders its aspect very different from the other parts of the continent. The Andes, which run along the whole western part of the country, till they terminate in the gloomy rocks of Cape Horn, are much less considerable in elevation than in the northern latitudes, and seldom exceed five thousand feet in height.

32.
Description
of Pata-
gonia.

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From their eastern slopes the great rivers of the country take their rise, of which the Colorado and Negro are the most remarkable. Immense plains, some of which are entirely covered with salt, lie on either side of these spacious streams; their aspect is very different from the Llanos and Pampas nearer the Line. Covered for the most part with heath, they have the sombre and melancholy character of the wastes of northern Europe. As you approach the south, vegetation becomes stunted; frequent cascades in the mountains attest the ceaseless humidity of the atmosphere. Ice and snow succeed at a slight elevation from the sea; vast pine forests cover the hills, and the scenery resembles that of Canada or Norway. Yet even here a species of the palm tribe is found, far from the rest of his race, as if to mark the character of the continent in its most distant and inclement extremity.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, xi. 638, 641. Fleurieu dans Marchand, 17.

33.
Character
and manners
of the in-
habitants.

The inhabitants of the country, so celebrated for their gigantic stature, which is in general six feet, wander like the Tartars over their boundless solitudes, mounted on small horses which they have obtained from the Spaniards, or a sort of asses which appear to be indigenous in its wilds. They are strangers to the comforts and refinements of life; all their habits conduce to hardihood. The god whom they adore is not the beneficent Father of the universe whom the Incas worshipped, but a terrible avenging deity, endowed with all the qualities of the Scandinavian Thor. Mounted on their small but hardy horses, they discharge their slings loaded with stones, with such address as to hit any animal at the distance of four hundred yards. The condition of their women, as in all rude tribes, is degraded. The men seem strangers to the passion of jealousy; hardy offspring is their principal object in marriage, and to obtain them they plunge the young women in water repeatedly at the time of their nuptials. Clothed in skins adorned with plumes and furs, without any iron weapons or implements, they

have yet proved a more formidable enemy to the Spaniards than any of the other inhabitants of South America. With the rudeness and indolence, they have exhibited the fierceness and independence of the savage character. Brave and persevering, they have long combated for their freedom; bloody defeats have never been able to break their spirit; and after three centuries of continued conflict, the shepherds of Patagonia, the mountaineers of Araucania, are still unsubdued.¹

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¹ Malte-
Brun, xi.
631, 645.
King's voy-
age round
Cape Horn,
1826, 74,
97.

When the adventurous Spaniards, guided by the genius of Columbus, approached the shores of the New World in 1519, they found in many places nations widely differing from those of European descent, and yet far advanced in the career of art and civilisation. Mild and unassuming in their manners, gentle and amiable in their disposition, the inhabitants of Peru had advanced far in the enjoyments and luxuries of pacific life. They had established a regular government for their defence, a state religion for their worship; they were acquainted with letters and the arts of rural economy; their skill in some species of manufacture was exquisite; they had built palaces, cities, and temples; they had gold and silver ornaments, and wealth, unhappily for them, too tempting to the rapacity of their conquerors. They had many of the graces of the age of gold, but none of the virtues of that of iron. Thence their inability to withstand the shock.* Patriotic in feeling, persevering in resistance, often heroic in suffering, they were destitute of the energy necessary to avoid disaster, or the vigour requisite to triumph over defeat.² They met the stroke of fate

34.
Character of
the Peruvians,
when the Spaniards
arrived in 1519.

² Herrera,
l. ii. c. 10.

* "Que peuvent tes amis, et leurs armes fragiles,
Ces marbres impuissans en sabres façonnés,
Ces soldats presque nus et mal disciplinés,
Contre ces fiers géants, ces tyrans de la terre,
De fer étincelans, armés de leur tonnerre,
Qui s'élancent sur nous, aussi prompts que les vents,
Sur des monstres guerriers pour eux obéissans?
L'univers a cédé: cédon, mon cher Zamore."

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with the resignation of martyrs, but could not combat it with the spirit of heroes. The debasing sway of a false theocracy had broken their spirit; the enjoyments of peace had enervated their courage; undisputed ascendancy over their neighbours had relaxed their prowess.

35.
Their easy
subjugation
by the
Spaniards.

Without iron weapons to enhance their powers; without horses to triple their speed; ignorant of firearms, or the marvels of European discipline—they threw themselves in crowds before the steel-clad warriors of Castile, and sank in meek desperation before the awful race, who, sheathed in impenetrable panoply, mounted on fierce and unknown animals, conveyed by winged monsters across the deep, seemed to wield the thunderbolts of heaven to blast every enemy who opposed them. A dreadful period of suffering and wretchedness succeeded this subjugation; the unexpected and extraordinary profusion of the precious metals in the New World proved an irresistible attraction to European cupidity; fanatical zeal thought it saw in the pagan multitudes who flocked round their idols the fairest theatre for the forcible conversion of the heathen: avarice and fanaticism, the two fiercest passions which can agitate the heart, conspired to impel the Spanish conquerors to unheard-of atrocities; and the first approach of the gospel of peace, and the power of civilization to the New World, became the signal for universal bloodshed, extortion, and wo.¹*

¹ Robert-
son's Ame-
rica, lib. v.
and vi.
Herrera, l.
ii. c. 10, 7,
9.

36.
Great effect
of the intro-
duction of
horses and
cattle.

Two circumstances, however, consequent on the irruption of this ruthless band of invaders, laid the foundation for a great ultimate change in the condition of the natives, and are destined in the end to do more than counterbalance

* Well might the Spanish rulers say with Alvarez, in Voltaire:—

“ Nous, d’or et de sang toujours insatiables,
Déserteurs de ces lois qu’il fallait enseigner,
Nous égorgeons ce peuple, au lieu de le gagner.
Par nous tout est en sang, par nous tout est en poudre,
Et nous n’avons du ciel imité que la foudre.

Alzire, Act i. scene 1.

all the evils with which the arrival of the European race was at first attended.

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The first of these was the introduction of horses and cattle into the savannahs of South America, and the consequent growth of a *nomad* race on the boundless plains so well fitted for its reception. It has been already mentioned,¹ that the want of these animals had, anterior to the Spanish invasion, both prevented the growth of pastoral nations in the New World, and rendered its inhabitants unable to withstand the shock of their reckless invaders. Unquestionably, when the Spaniards settled in South America, and imposed their cruel yoke on the vanquished, they had no intention of giving them this great advantage, or of communicating to the natives whom they had subdued that energy and those powers which might enable them in future times to overthrow their oppressors. But here, as in other instances, the hand of nature proved stronger than the arm of man; and the designs of Providence for the great family of mankind were worked out alike by the virtues and vices, the defeats and victories, of its varied creatures. The avarice of the Spanish conquerors, their insatiable thirst for gold, the very cruelties which they exercised on the native race, prepared an ultimate but decisive change in the habits and destiny of the species in the New World. The strength of the Indians, even when racked to the utmost to raise the gold and silver ore from the mines, and transport it to the coast, proved unequal to the impatient rapacity of the Spaniards, and horses were introduced in great numbers from Europe to augment their physical powers. Cows and sheep were soon after brought to supply the wants of the European settlers. Some of these animals gradually escaped to the Pampas, others were conveyed thither by the natives who escaped from their intolerable bondage; their numbers increased with incredible rapidity amidst the boundless savannahs and luxuriant pastures which were there spread out;² the

¹ *Ante*, ch.
lxvii. § 16.

² Azara,
Voyage au
Paraguay, i.
30. Hum-
boldt, vi.
96, 99.

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means both of living in these wilds on the produce of the herds, and of wandering at will over the vast expanse, were thus furnished to the frontier inhabitants; and for the first time in the history of America, a foundation was laid for *nomad nations*. From that moment a different ultimate destiny was imprinted on the New World.

37.
Introduc-
tion of iron
implements,
and inter-
mixture of
Spanish
blood.

While the introduction of the horse and the cow thus laid the foundation in South America of pastoral nations, a change not less important in their character and power was effected by the general use of *iron*, and the intermixture of European blood which followed the settlement of the victors. The rich and tempting mines of Mexico and Peru could only be worked to great profit by the aid of iron implements; the old native method of washing the sand of rivers, for grains of gold or silver ore, was far too slow for the insatiate thirst and boundless expectations of the European race. Iron arms and implements were introduced in large quantities, at once to work their mines and protect their treasures. At the same time, a considerable number of the Spanish settlers escaped from the drudgery of agriculture or the slavery of the mines, and impelled by bankruptcy in civilised, or the attractions of independence in savage life, took to the Pampas, and, mounted on their steeds of Andalusian descent, followed their numerous herds over these boundless wilds. Their pride no longer disdained the charms of native beauty; necessity compelled them to form Indian alliances, and gradually there arose a mixed race of men in the Pampas, subsisting like the Tartars entirely by their herds, mounted like them on hardy steeds, but with Castilian blood in their veins and Castilian lances in their hands. The influence of this race on the future fate of South America is destined to be immense. It has already appeared, in a decisive manner, in an important crisis of its history. When the Revolution broke out, *nomads* appeared in the field, but they appeared as victors; and when the scales hung even between the tenacious valour

of Old Spain and the insurgent energy of the colonies, it was by the lances of the pastoral race that the balance was made to preponderate in the decisive battle in favour of independence.* The Spaniards received from the Americans gold, but they gave them iron; and it is by iron alone, in this world, that the real age of gold is to be won.¹

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¹ Humboldt,
vi. 95, 97.
General
Miller, ii.
76.

The last benefit which the Spaniards have conferred upon the New World is to be found in the *Missions* which are so generally diffused in all Spanish America, and the habits of industry which they have in many places, to a considerable degree, established among the rude inhabitants of the forest. Universally in South America, as in all barbarous states, the Indians are indolent in the extreme; and it is their general repugnance to labour which is at once the principal cause of their poverty, and the invincible bar to their multiplication. But the Spanish missionaries have laboured with assiduous and heroic zeal to improve the habits of these wandering tribes; and extraordinary success has in many instances attended their efforts. Almost everywhere in the woods the first traces of industry are to be found in the neighbourhood of the missions—it is by the efforts of these worthy pioneers of civilisation that the wandering savage has, in general, been fixed to one place, and brought to submit to the permanent labours of agriculture. Their success has much exceeded that of the Protestant missionaries (if the Moravians are excepted) in the same sublime attempt, in any other part of the world; and the reason is, that the Jesuit priests, well acquainted with human nature, make no attempt to unfold to the natives abstract doctrines beyond their comprehension, but fix their attention on a few plain truths, and make them intelligible to their

38.
Great efforts
of the Mis-
sions in
South
America.

* The battle of Ayacucho, which finally established the independence of Peru, was gained by the hussars of Junin, all Gaucho lancers from the Pampas of Columbia, after the insurgent infantry had been totally routed by the Spanish host.—MILLER'S *Memoirs*, vol. ii. 168, 170.

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minds by symbols which strike the senses. They speak little to them of grace, election, or reprobation, but much of the Good Shepherd, the tender mother, the redeeming Saviour. They uniformly begin the work of conversion by an alteration in the mode of life—they strive to lead them to religion through a change of habits, not to a change of habits through religion. The spade, the hoe, the plough, are with them the pioneers of the Cross. The symbols of Romish worship, the cross, the pontifical robes, the censers, impressed the minds of these rude tribes; they were adapted to their infant state of civilisation. The Roman Catholic worship is the transition state from heathenism to Christianity; * it arises from the efforts of men to make religious doctrines intelligible to those who are not in a condition to understand abstract truth, but perfectly accessible to the influence of the senses. Its success, therefore, in the durable conversion of rude tribes, will generally be greater than that of the Protestants, who, discarding all aid from the senses, address themselves only to the intellectual powers, and seek support chiefly from inward fervour.¹

¹ Humboldt, vi. 219, 284, 285. Malte Brun, xi. 538, 589. Hist. de Perou, i. 66.

39.
Pernicious effect of the Roman Catholic religion in the towns.

But proportioned to the success of the Jesuit missions, in reclaiming a considerable part of the natives of South America from the listless indolence of savage life, and impressing upon their minds the great fundamental truths of Christianity, is the pernicious tendency which the Romish faith has had in cramping the energies of men, and proclaiming impunity to their vices, in the opulent cities which had arisen on the coasts peopled with the mingled Spanish and native race. The delicious climate

* A Protestant writer need not fear being accused of prejudice in this observation. It is not of the Roman Catholic religion as it appears in the writings of Bossuet or Fenelon that it is said: but of the Romish faith as it is practically taught in all Roman Catholic countries to the working classes. It is impossible to enter one of the churches in Roman Catholic states, and witness the fervent devotion which the poor there generally evince in the exercises of religion, without perceiving both that the religion there taught savours largely of heathen imagery, and that such images have the most powerful effect upon the minds of unenlightened men.

of South America ; the facility with which wealth was acquired by slight exertion in those favoured regions ; the habits of gallantry, and ideas of romance, which had descended to them from their Castilian ancestors ; the despotic nature of their government, which, by closing against them the path of public ambition, threw them into that of private enjoyment—all contributed to introduce a general relaxation of manners. Without having acquired the energy of the Anglo-Saxons, or the perseverance of the Dutch, they had lost the pristine vehemence of Spanish conquest. The Sybarites of the New World, the descendants of the European settlers led in the cities an indolent life, prone to gallantry, immersed in pleasure, luxurious in habits, easy in circumstances. The delights of the theatre and the corso, the graces of the ball-room, the taste for the concert, the habits of intrigue, had been transported to the American shores, but not the vigour which clears the forest, or the perseverance which irrigates the plain. To a people of such a tendency, the Romish faith proved the most pernicious form in which the blessed truths of Christianity could be conveyed ; for it at once coerced thought and fostered indulgence—dispensed with self-control and promised absolution—demoralised man and debased woman.¹

¹ Hall's So. America, i. 23; ii. 261, 263. Ducon-dray Hol-stein, Vie de Bolivar, 50, 65. Intro-duction.

Under the direction of the Jesuits, education in both sexes was generally neglected in South America, or, what was worse, directed to useless or pernicious objects. Attractive accomplishments, the guitar, the dance, the art of coquetry, and a few prescribed books of devotion, constituted the whole range of knowledge in the one sex ; the mere rudiments of Spanish, a slight acquaintance with Latin, and a copious acquaintance with the voluptuous novels with which the polyglot manufactories of that species of compositions in Paris furnish all the world, comprised in general the sole information of the other. In the whole of South America, before the revolution of 1810, there was but one printing-press, though there

40.
State of re-
ligion and
education.

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were abundance of schools and universities ! This affords decisive evidence of the extent to which the Jesuits had succeeded in enslaving the human mind. As a necessary consequence, the women were devout, and, in part, at least, dissolute : the men infidel, in many cases profligate, always idle. As much as the Romish form of worship is calculated to impress the mass of the community and convert rude nations, is the restraint on thought which it imposes fitted to revolt the higher class of intellect, and render sceptical enlightened states. The difficulty with Protestantism is to check the growth of the mass of civilised heathenism which accumulates round its unimpressive churches—that of Romanism, to retain within the pale of Christianity the educated higher orders, who shun its gorgeous ceremonies, or dread its prostration of thought. Infidelity, in states where the former prevails, is chiefly found in the lower ranks—where the latter, in the most elevated classes.^{1*}

¹ Viollet, Hist. de Bolivar, i. 60, 65. Introd.; and Hall's So. America, i. 23, 106; ii. 261, 262.

41.
Extent and divisions of the population.

It may readily be believed that among a people who, to the pride of Castilian descent and the indolence of the Spanish hidalgo, had superadded the luxurious habits of South American opulence, industry, especially in rural districts, had made very little progress. The whole labour of the country in the agricultural districts was performed by means of slaves, or the Indians and half-castes, to whom toil was a matter of necessity. Those of the pure Castilian blood were nowhere more than a fifth of the whole inhabitants; in Mexico, where their proportion was greatest, they were, in 1810, when the revolution broke out, one million two hundred thousand out of six million one hundred and twenty thousand. The mixed race, or Creoles, were somewhat above a fifth of the whole, or more numerous than the pure Spaniards; and the remaining three-fifths were Indians, by whom nearly the whole agricultural labour of the country was carried on.

* Compare France in 1789, under Romish direction in matters of religion, and England in 1843, under Protestant.

The Creoles were for the most part mechanics or tradesmen in the towns; the pure Spaniards, in great part at least, slumbered in the pleasures of indolence. This was the general division of the population, though with some varieties in particular districts.* The whole inhabitants of South America, including the Brazils, were in 1810 thirteen million six hundred thousand, and Mexico contained six millions more; so that the total population of the provinces in the New World in which the Spanish and Portuguese race had settled, was somewhat above nineteen millions, of which number not more than three millions were of the pure Spanish race, and three millions and a half were Creoles or mixed race. This was the growth of *three* centuries, from 1519, when the Spaniards first began to settle in their territory, to 1810, when the connexion with the mother country was broken off. In North America, on the other hand, during *two* centuries

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* Table exhibiting the population of Spanish America, including Mexico and Brazil, in 1810 when the Revolution broke out, distinguishing the Spaniards, Creoles, and natives:—

	Europeans.	Mixed races.	Indians or slaves.	Ecclesiastics.	Total.
I. Mexico, . . .	1,097,928	1,338,706	3,676,281	9439	6,122,354
II. Guatimala, . .	300,000	600,000	700,000	—	1,600,000
III. Cuba, . . .	200,000	198,000	212,000	—	600,000
IV. Porto Rico, . .	60,000	59,000	17,500	—	136,000
V. Caraccas, . . .	212,000	341,000	120,000 In. 62,000 Sl. }	—	785,000
VI. New Granada, .	—	—	—	—	1,327,000
VII. Quito, . . .	—	—	—	—	550,000
VIII. Chili, . . .	—	—	—	—	980,000
IX. Buenos Ayres, .	—	—	—	—	5,200,000
X. Peru, . . .	129,000	240,000	600,000 In. 40,000 Sl. }	—	1,000,000
XI. Independent Indians, . }	—	—	420,000	—	420,000
Total population in the Spanish provinces,					16,020,354
	Europeans.	Mixed races.	Slaves.	Free blacks.	
Brazil, . . .	843,000	426,000	1,930,400	150,500	3,617,000
Total Spanish and Portuguese native race in 1810,					19,638,524

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—from 1642, when the Puritans first approached their shores, to 1842—the Anglo-Saxon race had exactly doubled every twenty-three years and a half; and, with the aid of large and perennial accessions from the parent state, numbered in the latter period no less than seventeen millions of inhabitants, of whom fourteen millions were freemen of pure English descent.* Including the British provinces in North America, the total Anglo-Saxon population, deducting the French Canadians, had swelled to nearly *sixteen millions!* Nothing can demonstrate more clearly than this result the superior power of the Anglo-Saxon race, the reformed faith, and popular energy, in carrying on the work of colonisation, to the Castilian blood, Romish religion, and despotic institutions.

42.
Prosperous
condition of
the slaves in
the Spanish
provinces.

There is, however, no unmixed good or evil in human affairs. If the vast increase and ceaseless vigour of the Anglo-Saxons in the New World gave just cause for congratulation, the deplorable, and to all appearance hopeless, condition of the slaves in the southern provinces of the Union unfolds a dreadful evil, possibly destined in the end to mar its fortunes, and, within the sphere at least of their influence, overturn its institutions. On the other hand, if the indolent habits, pride of birth, and proneness to enjoyment, of the Spanish race in the southern portion of the American continent, afford less room for sanguine anticipations as to the progress and influence of the European blood, and the conversion of

* The population of the United States of North America, by the census of 1841, was as follows:—

Free American whites,	.	.	.	14,194,188	
Free blacks,	.	.	.	387,265	
Black slaves,	.	.	.	2,487,113	
Total Americans,	.	.	.	17,668,666	
British provinces, all white,	.	.	.		1,650,000
				Add 14,194,188 Americans,	
				And 1,650,000 Canadians.	
Total British race,	.	.	.	15,844,188	

the wilderness into the abode of civilised man, the condition of the slaves, and of the Indian race, presents ample subject for congratulation. In the first instance, indeed, the sudden and violent translation of a large portion of the natives to forced work in the mines, accompanied as it was with an entire change of temperature and habits—from the greater part of those establishments being ten or twelve thousand feet above the sea—occasioned a prodigious mortality, which was increased by the rigour of their inexorable taskmasters, and the frequent use of ardent spirits, to which the wretched labourers had recourse to recruit their strength, or drown the recollection of their sorrows. The smallpox, and other European diseases, together with the general misery which followed the entire change of property and influence consequent on the Spanish conquest, conspired, with the insatiable avarice of the first rulers of the country, to produce a fearful decline in the numbers of the native inhabitants. But these evils have now in a great measure passed away. The Spaniards have since become the best slave-masters in the world; and, in their conduct towards the native race, they have exhibited a model which other nations would do well to imitate, who are louder than they in their professions of philanthropy.¹

The secret of the wise and mild treatment of the slaves by the Spaniards in South America is to be found in the *gradual* relaxation of the bonds of servitude, and its conversion, in most cases, into a fixed money payment, under the influence of the policy which the priests inculcated upon the rulers of the provinces. A slave who by his industry had amassed fifteen hundred or two thousand francs, (£60 or £80,) was entitled to redeem his liberty at those sums, varying in different colonies, from his master; and the law secured to the slaves various advantages, which gave them the means of easily realising this amount. Thus slavery gradually wore out, without any loss of property to the masters, by the simple acquisition

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¹ Malte-Brun, xi. 397, 398. Humboldt, Nouvelle Espagne, i. 361.

43.
Mode in which the slaves and natives came to be so well managed.

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of those habits among the more industrious of the slaves which qualified them for the enjoyment of freedom. The Indians came to be subjected to no other burden than a capitation tax, which was reduced in some provinces as low as five, and in none exceeded fifteen francs a-year. They were permitted to administer justice, by their own chiefs, to themselves, and continued subject only in general government to the Spaniards. The slaves newly made were those only who had become prisoners in the constant wars which prevailed with the independent tribes; and even they enjoyed such facilities of earning their freedom that very few of them remained in a state of servitude. The condition of such as did so was so comfortable that it might be an object of envy to an English labourer. Stripes or corporal punishment were in general unknown: living continually in family with their masters, having no wish beyond it, they resembled the old domestics, now unfortunately so rare, who were formerly to be found in almost every respectable English family. For long before the revolution, the whole persons employed in the mines had been free, and worked for daily wages; the slaves in all the states were in such inconsiderable numbers, seldom exceeding a twentieth of the people, as to excite no disquietude; and the native races were rapidly increasing in numbers, and repairing the losses they had sustained in the first years of European conquest. The contrast which such a state of things exhibited to the increasing number and hopeless degradation of the slaves in the republican states of North America is very striking, but it is easily accounted for. The management of the slaves in South America was directed by the government and priests, who were not slaveholders; in North America, by the universal suffrage of the white population, who were. Men can easily be just in disposing of the property of others, rarely in directing their own.¹ Had the slaves in the British colonies belonged to the House of Commons, or to the

¹ Malte-Brun, xi. 400, 415. Humboldt, Nouvelle Espagne, i. 413, 417. Vie de Bolivar, 55, 64, Introd. Azara, 74.

constituencies who returned its members, emancipation would never have taken place.

The most important portion of the population of Spanish America, in a military point of view, are the Gauchos, or inhabitants of the Pampas. This numerous and energetic race, who have spread in the boundless savannahs of the New World with the herds and horses which were introduced by the Spaniards, have the same roaming propensity and enterprising spirit which everywhere form the characteristics of the pastoral race; but in many respects they differ essentially from all the other pastoral nations of the earth. The shepherds never accompany their flocks; they merely collect them once a-week to see that none have strayed; and during the intervening time the herds wander at will over the *estancia*, or farm, which is usually forty or fifty square miles in extent. The rest of their time is spent in riding or breaking horses, or in slothful indolence, sleeping like hounds when the chase is over in their rude cabins. The Arabs, even, do not excel them in horsemanship. Constantly mounted from their earliest years, riding is their only amusement, and almost sole occupation; they never go any distance on foot; and by constant exercise they acquire such skill in the art, that the most furious wild horse is unable to shake their steady seat. The weekly gathering of the herds is made at full gallop; for, from the extent of the pastures, the cattle are nearly as wild, and fully as swift, as the horses which bear the shepherds.¹*

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44.
Manners of
the gauchos,
or the pas-
toral na-
tives.

¹ Azara, 64,
78. Hall's
South
America,
i. 145, 147.

* The manner in which the cattle are hunted and caught is peculiar to South America, and highly characteristic of its pastoral inhabitants. The shepherds, mounted on their swiftest steeds, pursue the cattle at full gallop, each armed with a *lasso*, or rope, with a noose at the end of it, a spear and knife. With incredible dexterity this noose is thrown so as to catch, often at the distance of fifty yards, the horns or one of the hind feet of the flying animal, by which means he is entangled, and immediately pierced with the spear, generally thrown from a distance. They fish on horseback, carry water from the well on horseback, and even attend mass on horseback, remaining at the church door seated on their steeds, while the ceremony is going forward. Rude in their manners, illiterate in their ideas, filthy in their habits and persons, they

Extraordi-
nary skill in
the use of
the lasso.

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45.

Prodigious
numbers of
cattle and
horses in
these plains.

So favourable have the pastures of the New World proved to the multiplication of the horses and cattle which were introduced by the Spaniards on their first arrival in the country, that the number of both is now immense, and is advancing at a rate so prodigious that there seems no limit whatever to their increase. Such is their quantity, when compared with the inconsiderable demand for animal food, that, except in the immediate neighbourhood of large towns, the carcass of the animal is of no sort of value, and is allowed to lie on the spot where it was killed, like common carrion, after the skin has been taken off. The number both of horses and cattle which run wild in the Pampas is beyond all calculation; but those which are within known limits, and form private property, may be guessed at, and will give an idea of the much greater number which lie beyond in the unexplored Llanos. Between the mouth of the Orinoco and the Lake Maracaybo alone, which constitutes but a small part of the Pampas, there were in 1810, one million two hundred thousand head of cattle, one hundred and eighty thousand horses, and ninety thousand mules, which were numbered, and belonged to different proprietors. It may assist the imagination in conceiving such multitudes, to say that the number of horses is just the same as that which Napoleon took with him in his expedition into Russia.¹

¹ Humboldt, vi. 98, 101.
Azara, 130.

In the Pampas of Buenos Ayres there are twelve millions of horned cattle, besides three millions of horses—a number of both twice as great as are to be found in the whole kingdom of France.* These numbers are those

are so habituated to the slaughtering of cattle, which is their chief amusement, that they have acquired an extraordinary degree of ferocity of character. Passionate and revengeful, they are alike incapable of control by others as by themselves; they shed blood without scruple on the slightest provocation, and, bound by no ties of gratitude or necessity to their masters, are ever ready to fly to the desert, and, carrying with them a few horses and cattle, are soon beyond the reach of pursuit, and commence amidst its deep solitudes the roving life of independence.²

* In France there are 6,000,000 horned cattle, of which 3,500,000 are oxen

* Azara, 73, 128. Hall's South America, i. 147, 149.

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46.

Their prodigious multiplication in the Pampas of Buenos Ayres.

¹Humboldt, vi. 98, 101. Pedro Simon Caf. 14. Depons, Voyage a la Terre Ferme, i. 10. Azara, 130.

47.

Mining establishments in the mountains.

only which belong to individual proprietors; the multitudes which overspread the Pampas in a wild state exceed any calculation that can be made. Many individual proprietors in the Llanos are possessed of thirteen or fourteen thousand head of cattle, of which they sell one-half annually; but, in fact, the number they own is so great, and the bounds over which they wander so immense, that they neither know the one nor the other with any thing approaching to accuracy. The increase of these animals is the most extraordinary instance of multiplication which is recorded in the annals of mankind; for they have not yet been three centuries there, having been first introduced in the year 1548, by Christoval Rodriguez, a native of Spain.¹

The MINES of Mexico and Peru, which have acquired such celebrity all over the world, and, by the alteration they made in the value of the precious metals, have effected so many important monetary and social changes in European society, have been affected in the most extraordinary degree by the revolution. The most celebrated of these are the far-famed silver mines of Potosi in the Andes, which were discovered in 1545, and which have proved so productive that, from that period down to 1803, they had produced silver to the enormous amount of 5,750,000,000 francs, or £230,000,000 sterling. They were more productive, however, at first than at the beginning of the nineteenth century; but this was more than compensated by the riches extracted from other mines, especially in Mexico; so that the sum-total of the precious metals imported from the New World, prior to the South American revolution, was constantly increasing. The city of Potosi, elevated fourteen thousand feet above the sea in

labouring the soil. In the Austrian monarchy there are 13,400,000 horned cattle. The number of horses which are rated to the horse-tax in Great Britain is 306,000, but that number is certainly within the truth, and is exclusive of the horses employed in agriculture, which are probably nearly as many more. —See PEUCHET, *Statistique de la France*, 274; HUMBOLDT, vi. 96, 97; DEPONS, *Voyage à la Terre Ferme*, i. 10; AZARA, *Voyages au Paraguay*, 130; LICHTENSTEIN, *Statistiques d'Autriche*, 160; and PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, ii. 40.

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the mountains of Peru, received such an influx of workmen from these mines in its neighbourhood, that it contained, when the revolution broke out, no less than a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. The mines of gold and silver in Mexico were twice as productive as those of Peru and Buenos Ayres; and the quantity of the precious metals raised from the different mining establishments in the Cordilleras, in Mexico, and throughout South America, was so prodigious, that in less than three centuries, from 1545 to 1810, it amounted to the sum-total of 5,766,700,000 Spanish piastres, or £1,426,200,000 sterling.* It may assist the imagination in conceiving the real amount of this sum to say, that the silver alone of which it was composed would have formed a solid ball eighty-five feet in diameter. The effect of this vast influx of the precious metals was to occasion a progressive and constant fall in the value of money, and rise in the money price of all other articles, over all the world. And though this change bore hard on the holders of annuities, bonds, and other money payments, yet it contributed so much to ameliorate the condition of the greatly more numerous class who live by buying and selling, or by the daily wages of labour, and who consequently were enriched by a rise in the money price of the commodities in which they dealt, that it may be considered as one of the principal causes of the prosperity of modern Europe.¹

Not only was the total amount of the precious metals raised from the mines of America so considerable, but it had, for a hundred and thirty years before the revolution broke out in the Spanish colonies, been, with the exception of one short period, constantly increasing. From 1694 to 1803, the annual produce of the Mexican mines

* The proportion was :—

	Piastres.		Pounds sterling.
Gold,	1,348,500,000	or	£337,150,000
Silver,	4,358,200,000	or	1,089,050,000
	5,706,700,000		£1,426,200,000

—HUMBOLDT, *Nouvelle Espagne*, iii. 418.

¹ Humboldt's
Nouvelle
Espagne,
iii. 361,
413, 418.

had multiplied nearly *five-fold*.* Adam Smith calculated the annual receipt of coin and bullion by Spain and Portugal in 1775, when he wrote the *Wealth of Nations*, at £6,000,000 annually;¹ but it is now ascertained, by official documents, that this sum was too small by two-fifths, and that the real amount was about £8,500,000. It afterwards increased steadily, as the demand for gold and silver to meet the necessities of the European war augmented; and in 1803 it had reached the amount of 43,500,000 Spanish piastres, or £10,000,000 annually, of which £9,000,000 came from the Spanish colonies. The rapid rise in the money price of all articles which took place in Great Britain, and indeed all over Europe, during the war, is in part to be ascribed to this cause.† The incalculable importance of any variation in the supply of the precious metals from the New World, upon the operations of commerce in every civilised nation, and through these, in an especial manner, on the social and political state of Great Britain, will not be duly appreciated, unless it is at the same time kept in mind, that the supplies of gold and silver obtained from America are so immense,² as compared with all that can be got from Europe and Asia, that in the beginning of the nineteenth

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48.Steady increase in the supply of the precious metals for a century before the Revolution.
1 *Wealth of Nations*, ii. 70.* Humboldt's *Nouv. Esp.* iii. 396, 401.

* Average annual produce of the mines of Mexico in gold and silver :—

	Spanish piastres.	
1690—1720,	5,458,830	or £1,352,405
1721—1743,	9,177,768	.. 2,294,442
1744—1770,	11,854,825	.. 2,963,958
1771—1782,	17,223,916	.. 4,304,434
1783—1790,	19,517,081	.. 4,877,700
1791—1803,	22,325,824	.. 5,581,431

—HUMBOLDT'S *Nouvelle Espagne*, iii. 306.

† Value of gold and silver obtained from the American mines in 1805 :—

	Piastres.	
Mexico,	22,000,000	or £5,500,000
Peru,	5,240,000	.. 1,310,000
Chili,	2,060,000	.. 515,000
Buenos Ayres, (Potosi,)	4,850,000	.. 1,215,000
New Granada,	2,990,000	.. 742,500
Brazil,	4,360,000	.. 1,090,000
	41,500,000	£10,372,500

—HUMBOLDT'S *Nouvelle Espagne*, iii. 398.

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49.
System of
government
in the Spa-
nish colo-
nies.

century, they constituted above nine-tenths of the whole supply of the globe.*

The government in all these provinces, anterior to the revolution, was the same. It consisted of a governor or viceroy, aided by a council, who conducted the administration in the name of the King of Spain, and whose powers were nearly as great as those of the Spanish monarch in the mother country. He was responsible to the king alone: and it may readily be believed that on a man of any address, such a distant appeal, in a despotic state, was not likely to impose any real or efficacious check. To assist him in the discharge of his numerous and onerous duties, he was assisted by a great council, styled the Real Audencia, which disposed of all civil affairs. The ecclesiastics had a separate tribunal, composed entirely of churchmen, over which the authority of the captain-general did not extend. The viceroys in general held office for five or six years, like the governor-general of India, during which period they generally enjoyed the opportunity, by legitimate means, of amassing a considerable fortune. There were six of those viceroys in these magnificent domains: one in Venezuela, who from the capital of the Caraccas ruled eight provinces; one in New Granada, who governed twenty-two; one at Panama, who governed two; one at Santa Fé de Bogota, who directed twelve; one at Quito, who ruled nine; one at Mexico, who governed fifteen. The laws, institutions, and system of government in these different provinces, were frequently as dissimilar to each other as in different kingdoms of the German Empire;¹ and equally vexatious

¹ Vie de Bolivar, i. 9, 10; Introduction. Malte-Brun, xi. 473, 482.

* Table showing the annual produce of the mines of gold and silver in Europe, Asia, and America, in the year 1809:—

	Gold in francs.	Silver in francs.	Total in francs.	In £ sterling.
Europe, .	4,467,444	11,704,444	16,171,888	640,000
Northern Asia, .	1,855,111	4,824,122	6,677,333	261,000
America, .	59,557,889	176,795,778	236,333,667	9,841,000
	65,878,444	193,324,444	259,202,888	10,742,000

—HUMBOLDT's *Nouvelle Espagne*, iii. 400.

restraints fettered commerce and impeded travelling in passing from one viceroyalty to another, as in crossing the frontiers of independent European kingdoms.

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The rule of the Spaniards in their American dominions, as all the world knows, was in some respects overrun with abuses ; the natural result of the selfishness of human nature, acting in a sphere where cupidity was unrestrained, and rapacity unbounded. The *meta* or compulsory toil, exacted from the natives of each district, for the space of a year, either in the mines or in agriculture, fell with peculiar severity upon that unhappy race ; as, although the person on whom the lot fell received wages, which in the mines was two shillings a-day, yet they were unaccustomed to toil, and indifferent to the artificial wants which alone to civilised man render it tolerable. Twelve thousand Indians were annually subjected to this burden in the province of Potosi alone ; and such was the effect of the severe labour in the mines on the native constitutions, that it was computed that 8,285,000 Indians had perished in those of Peru, from their discovery to the year 1800. The *repartimiento* or privilege, granted, at first with the best intentions, to the corregidores or superintendents of districts, to furnish articles of necessary consumption to the Indians, had come to be perverted into a gross abuse, and become a lucrative monopoly to the persons in power, of which they availed themselves to force worthless commodities, at an exorbitant price, on reluctant purchasers. The capitation tax, though generally light, sometimes was made the groundwork of cruel oppression in the *obraje* or public bridewells, if remaining unpaid. The parish priests exacted enormous fees from their parishioners, insomuch that some livings in Peru were worth ten thousand dollars a-year, which incomes were, however, generally spent in the noblest manner.¹ These abuses produced several dreadful rebellions among the natives, in one of which, in 1780, in revenge for the inhuman barbarities exercised by the Spaniards on a chief,

50.

Oppressive
restrictions
to which the
colonies
were sub-
jected.

¹ Don Tor-
quez Juan
and Antonio
de Ulloa,
translated
by Barry, i.
162, 289.

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51.
Admirable
principles,
but abuses
in practice,
of the Span-
ish colonial govern-
ment.

Tupac Amaru,* they stormed the city of Sorata, and put every soul in it, twenty thousand in number, save a few priests, to the sword.

The principles of a benignant paternal government breathed through every page of the fundamental laws of the Spanish colonies; and if it had been found practicable to execute them in the spirit in which they were conceived, they would have formed a code of colonial law superior to that ever adopted by any free state upon earth.† But, unfortunately, the kings of Spain delegated their powers to a supreme council, called the "Council of the Indies," which came to monopolise the whole government of the colonies, and rendered it little better than a means of aggrandising and enriching a limited class of society in the mother country. To aid the monopolies established in favour of the dominant race, numerous restrictions on industry, both commercial and agricultural, were established, which at length fettered the colonies to an extent which was in the highest degree vexatious. Commercial intercourse was stopped between the different viceroyalties;‡ the manufacture of any sort of cloth finer than what the Indians required was forbidden, as well as the cultivation of many of the plants and trees best adapted for the climate, particularly vines, olives, and almonds:§ trade with strangers was generally prohibited, or subjected to such restraints as practically led to that result:¹ the cod and whale fisheries on the coasts

¹ Humboldt, *Nouv. Esp.* iv. 116, 137.
Miller, i. 16.
24. Robert-
son's *America*. Hall's
South America,
ii. 111.

* Tupac Amaru beheld from the scaffold the execution of his wife, his children, and many of his faithful followers; after which his tongue was cut out, and he was torn in pieces by wild horses.—MILLER, *Memoir*, i. 17. The Indians retaliated, on the capture of Sorata, by barbarities yet more terrible, and five hundred times as numerous.

† See *Recapitulacion de las Leyes de las Indias*. Madrid, 1781.

‡ "Per ultima resolucion del Conde de Chinchon y acuerdo de la hacienda, ordenamos y mandamos a los vireyes del Peru y Nueva España que infaliblemente prohiban y estorban el comercio y trafico entre ambos regnos, per todos los caminos y medios que les fueran posibles."—*Leyes*, 79, tit. lv. 1, 9.

§ "Quedando expresamente prohibido per la Nueva España, Tierra Firme, y Santa Fe, los vinos, aguardientes, vinagre, y aceyte de olivas, pasas y almendras del Peru y Chili, y privados rigurosamente en todas partes los plantios de olivas y vides."—*Gazeta de Mexico*, Oct. 6, 1804.

were forbidden, lest the colonies should acquire an independent marine, though these fisheries were open to foreigners; the gold and silver mines were constituted a royal monopoly, and all working of the mines of quicksilver and iron was absolutely prohibited.

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By law, the native Spaniards of America were eligible to all offices, civil and military; but so rigidly was the principle of exclusion practised by the supreme council of the Indies, that this privilege was little more than nominal. Out of six hundred and two captains-general and governors, all except fourteen had been Old Spaniards: and of five hundred and fifty ecclesiastics advanced to the episcopal dignity in America, only fifty-five were born in the colonies. Anxiously as the Spanish policy was directed to the securing all the benefits of colonial intercourse to the mother country, it was not guided even with that view by any enlarged spirit. The haughty and indolent hidalgos of Spain, disdaining industry or commercial pursuits, could not afford a sufficient market to colonial industry any more than they could furnish them with an adequate infusion of European vigour; the encouragement of both was cramped by being confined to each other; and the American commerce, which might, if met by corresponding efforts at home, and equally diffused, have sustained and vivified the whole monarchy, confined to the harbours of Cadiz and Corunna, produced only a partial, and, as regarded those excluded from it, an invidious accumulation of wealth. In a word, the practical government of Spain towards the colonies was characterised by that monopolising spirit which is universal among mankind, joined to that narrow concentration of its advantages which is peculiar to countries of despotic or aristocratic institutions.¹

52.
Monopolising spirit
of the
Spanish
government.

¹ Humboldt, *Nouv. Esp.* iv. 120, 154. Miller's *Memoirs*, i. 17, 24. *Leyes*, 3, 5, 13, 14, 22, 24, 28.

Notwithstanding these restrictions, however, the native capabilities of South America, both as regarded agricultural and mineral productions, and those arising from the increase of the population, which doubled once in

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53.

Great extent of the trade carried on between Spain and the colonies.

forty-five years, were such, that the trade carried on between them and the mother country was immense. It amounted, when the revolution broke out, to the enormous sum of 59,500,000 piastres, or £15,000,000 sterling, of imports from Europe; and 30,000,000 piastres, or £7,500,000 of exports in agricultural produce; besides 38,500,000 piastres, or £9,600,000, remitted in the precious metals to Spain.* This comprehended the contraband as well as the regular trade, in the former of which Great Britain had the principal share; but at least three-fourths of this traffic was conducted in the regular channels, and flowed into the Spanish peninsula. The magnitude of this trade may be judged of by the fact, that the whole exports of Great Britain to all her colonies in every part of the globe put together now only amount to £16,231,000. If the trade to the Philippines and Canaries be added, the total exports to the Spanish colonies in 1809 was £16,700,000, or *more than the whole exports of Great Britain to her colonies at this time*. Spain derived a gross income of 38,000,000 piastres, or £9,500,000, from her colonies, of which 30,000,000 piastres, or £7,500,000,¹ was expended in expenses connected with the administration of the colonies themselves,

¹ Plackmann's State Tables, 1839, p. 22.

* Table showing the Exports of Spain to her South American colonies in 1809, before the Revolution;—

	IMPORTS FROM SPAIN.		EXPORTS TO SPAIN.			
			Agricultural Produce.		Precious Metals.	
	Piastres.	L.	Piastres.	L.	Piastres.	L.
Porto Rico and Cuba,	11,000,000	2,750,000	9,900,000	2,250,000	—	—
New Spain and Mexico,	21,000,000	5,250,000	9,000,000	2,250,000	22,500,000	5,660,000
New Granada,	5,700,000	1,450,000	2,000,000	500,000	3,000,000	750,000
Caraccas,	8,500,000	2,150,000	4,000,000	1,000,000	—	—
Peru and Chili,	11,500,000	2,875,000	4,000,000	1,000,000	8,000,000	2,000,000
Buenos Ayres and Potosi,	3,500,000	875,000	2,000,000	500,000	5,000,000	1,250,000
Total,	59,200,000	15,200,000	30,000,000	7,350,000	38,500,000	9,650,000
Total Imports, 59,200,000 Piastres or L. 15,200,000						
Total Exports, 68,500,000						
Balance in favour of Spain,		9,300,000	2,750,000			

and 8,000,000 piastres, or £2,000,000, remained clear to the royal treasury of Madrid. The colonial income constituted, anterior to the revolution, more than a half of the whole revenue of the monarchy.

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- England, aware of the vast commercial intercourse which Spain carried on with her American colonies, had long desired to effect their independence in order to share in its profits; and Mr Pitt had more than once made secret advances towards the attainment of that object. In particular, instructions were sent to Sir Thomas Picton, the governor of Trinidad, in 1797, to tender assistance to the inhabitants of the neighbouring territory of Venezuela, if they felt disposed to revolt against the authority of the mother country; and a negotiation took place with General Miranda, an officer of talent and enterprise, in the West Indies, in 1806, with a view to the same design. But these projects came to nothing, from the absorption of the whole attention of Great Britain in the war with France. Discontent widely prevailed, especially in consequence of the monopoly of the trade by the merchants of Cadiz, but no event had occurred which fanned the smothered embers into a flame; and the inhabitants of the New World, naturally indolent, slumbered on under a government which they disliked, but which they had not energy to attempt to subvert. The unfortunate result of the expedition to Buenos Ayres in 1807, and the enthusiasm which the defeat of the British there justly produced throughout the whole Spanish Main, contributed still farther to impede any attempt on the part of the South Americans to achieve their independence by English aid, and would probably have postponed the revolution to an indefinite period, had not matters been brought to a crisis, and a sudden change been wrought on their destinies, by the attack of Napoleon on Spain, which was fraught with such momentous results to continental Europe.¹

54.
First cause
of the sever-
ance of the
colonies
from Spain.

¹Ducondray
Holstein,
Vie de Bo-
livar, i. 34.
Ann. Reg.
1810, 223.
Robinson's
Life of
Picton, 1.

That iniquitous act of aggression was chiefly suggested

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1808.

55.

General de-
termination
not to sub-
mit to the
government
of France.
July 19,
1808.

Aug. 5.

by the anxious desire which the French Emperor felt to gain possession of the treasures of Mexico and Peru, and maintain his colossal European army by the produce of the South American mines. No sooner, accordingly, had he succeeded in his hypocritical designs at Bayonne, than he despatched the brig *Serpent* from that place, with secret instructions for the captain-general of the Caraccas. The *Serpent* was chased by the English frigate *Acasta*; and although the Frenchman arrived first at Caraccas, yet Captain *Beaver* of the *Acasta* contrived to inform the inhabitants of the real character of the events at Bayonne. Such was the universal indignation produced by this intelligence, that Ferdinand VII. was unanimously and enthusiastically proclaimed, the English officer and crew were received with transport, and the French captain was obliged to fly for his life, and escape on board his vessel during the obscurity of night. *Iluorigaray*, governor of Mexico, in like manner spurned all the offers of Napoleon to continue him in office, and proclaimed Ferdinand VII. amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants. But although Napoleon was thus utterly foiled in his attempt to get possession of South America, yet the events which followed in the Peninsula not the less certainly produced a virtual separation of the colonies from the mother country. During the mortal struggle in Europe, the government of Spain was able to do nothing to support its authority in the New World. Juntas were formed at Caraccas, Mexico, Buenos Ayres, and other places, in imitation of those in Spain, which practically assumed the direction of affairs; and although the Spanish governors were still obeyed, and the people were unanimous in their detestation of the French usurpation, yet they were in fact becoming habituated to self-government; and the conviction was daily spreading among all classes, that the connexion with Old Spain, amidst the disasters with which it was overwhelmed, could not much longer be maintained.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1810, 223,
225, Ducon-
dray Hol-
stein, Vie
de Bolivar,
i. 17, 28.
Miller's
Mem. i.
32, 33.

The invasion of Andalusia by the French in February 1810, and the flight of the junta of Seville to Cadiz, which has already been mentioned,¹ brought matters to a crisis. The whole country, with the exception of the Isle of Leon, being now to all appearance overrun by the enemy, the rightful monarch in captivity, and the government in Cadiz entirely in the hands of a junta elected for the most part by the population of that city, the inhabitants of the Spanish colonies reasonably concluded that their connexion with Old Spain was virtually dissolved by the dissolution of its legitimate authority, and the dethronement of the only sovereign to whom they owed allegiance. The government of Spain was virtually vested in the inhabitants of Cadiz, the very city which had been enriched by the monopoly of their commerce, and the restraints on their industry. Allegiance to such a body could not for a moment be thought of. As, therefore, submission to the usurpation of France was equally out of the question, it was generally felt that no alternative remained but to declare themselves independent; and so naturally did this idea arise from the circumstances in which they were placed, that the step was taken nearly simultaneously in many provinces, without co-operation, and with neither dissension nor bloodshed. On the 19th of April 1810, the provinces of Caraccas, Cumana, Barinas, Margarita, Barcelona, Merida, and Truxillo, declared themselves united in a federative government, under the name of the American Confederation of Venezuela. They did not as yet, however, openly throw off the authority of the Spanish monarch, nor declare themselves independent; but professing to administer the public affairs in his name, declared their unshaken loyalty to his person, and their determination not to submit to the invasion which had deprived him of his European dominions.²

The measures of the popular leaders, however, soon showed that, though not designing to act with disloyalty

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1810.

56.

Causes
which led
to the revolt
against the
Spanish
govern-
ment.

¹ *Ann.*, ch.
lxiii. § 46.
April 19,
1810.

² *Toreno*, iii.
404. *Ducon-*
dray *Hol-*
stein, *Vie*
de Bolivar,
i. 47, 56.
Ann. Reg.
1810,
224, 227.

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LXVII.

1810.

57.

The revolution spreads and becomes universal. July 8, 1810.

towards Ferdinand, they were not disposed to submit to the dictation of the junta of Cadiz, elected by the very merchants whose monopoly had so long fettered their industry. On the very day on which the confederation was proclaimed, Silias, their chief, compelled the governor-general, Emparan, to arrest d'Anca, the most powerful and able member of the Spanish council—a demand to which he was obliged to submit. Encouraged by this success, the popular chiefs required the arrest of other Spanish councillors, which was also complied with, and the remainder, seeing their power at an end, sent in their resignations. The *Audencia Real*, the symbol of Spanish power in Venezuela, was supplanted by the popular junta, the organ of local self-government; and immediately after, the latter body gave decisive proof of its disposition to emancipate South America from the trammels of the Cadiz merchants, by passing a decree pronouncing the Indians liberated from the capitation tax, declaring commerce free, and sending the Spanish governor and councillors by sea to the United States of America. Buenos Ayres, Guayaquil, and several other provinces of the Spanish colonies, soon after followed the example of Caraccas, and juntas were established in them, all conducting government in the name of Ferdinand VII., and professing the utmost loyalty to him and the royal family, and even a lively wish to assist the mother country in its contest with France, but showing no disposition to submit to the regency, or the junta at Cadiz.¹

¹ Ducon-
dray Hol-
stein, Vie
de Bolivar,
i. 52, 59.
Ann. Reg.
1810, 227.
Miller's
Mem. i. 37,
46. Torneo,
iii. 405, 407.

58.
Establish-
ment of a
monarchical
government
in Brazil,
and com-
mencement
of the revo-
lutionary
war.

The American colonies, however, were far too important a jewel in the Spanish crown to be surrendered by the government at Cadiz without a struggle; and as the produce of the gold and silver mines in those distant possessions constituted almost the whole revenue which remained to the government, it became a matter of necessity to endeavour to effect the subjugation of the insurgent provinces. Unbounded was the indignation

excited at Cadiz when intelligence of these untoward events reached that city. It far exceeded the hostility felt against the French. The South Americans had so long submitted without an audible murmur to their domination, that it was never conceived possible they could shake off the yoke; the Cadiz merchants felt as if their own slaves had revolted against them. It was not a national but a private quarrel. Violent decrees were fulminated against the insurgent provinces, which were declared in a state of blockade; and every effort was made, by private intrigue and public denunciation, to get them to return to their duty. These produced, however, no other effect but that of inducing Guayaquil, which in the first instance had joined the Confederation of Venezuela, to resume its allegiance to the government in Europe. But still the royalist party was very strong in the colonies, and everything presaged a bloody civil war, ere the contest should be decided in favour of either of the contending parties. Porto-Rico, Mexico, Cuba, Spanish Guiana, Monte Video, and Peru, adhered to the regency at Cadiz, and sent powerful subsidies from the mines to carry on the contest with France; and the continued existence of a monarchical government in Brazil, from whence an army of observation ten thousand strong was despatched to the frontiers of Buenos Ayres, proved a strong support to the numerous adherents of Spain in the colonies. But with these exceptions, the whole country was arrayed from the very outset on the side of independence. The maritime and commercial provinces of Venezuela, Quito, and Buenos Ayres, were enthusiastic in the cause; and the whole Gauchos of the Pampas, ardent for freedom, promised them the aid of their numerous cavalry. Meanwhile the government of Great Britain, though urgently solicited by the insurgent colonies to declare in their favour, albeit not insensible to the commercial advantages which they might derive from such a step,¹ adhered with

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LXVII.
1810.

Sept. 6,
1810.

¹ Ann. Reg.
227, 231.
Ducondray
Holstein, i.
57, 62. Tor-
eno, iii. 412,
413.

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LXVII.

1811.

scrupulous good faith to their treaties with the regency at Cadiz, and declined giving the slightest countenance to any step which might tend to a dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy.*

59.
Final breach
of the colo-
nies with
Spain.
Aug. 2,
1811.

Sept. 18,
1810.

July 5,
1811.

Oct. 2, 1811.
1 Ducon-
dray Hol-
stein, i. 63,
70. Hist.
de la Rév.
d'Espagne
en 1820,
74, 80.

During the remainder of 1810 and the whole of 1811, the cause of the insurgents made great progress. Although the junta of Quito was dissolved, and its leaders, to the number of three hundred, were barbarously put to death by the Spanish viceroys of Santa Fe de Bogota and Peru, who united their forces against that province, yet in other quarters the cause of the revolution was triumphant. The insurgents of Buenos Ayres repulsed the governor of Cordova, who, at the head of a body of royal troops, tried to reduce that city; Chili followed the example of Caraccas and Buenos Ayres; Mexico soon after hoisted the standard of revolt; and on the 5th July 1811, Venezuela solemnly proclaimed its independence, and was speedily followed by Mexico, Carthage, Socorro, and the principal places in New Granada, and after a short delay by Buenos Ayres. England endeavoured to mediate between the regency at Cadiz and the revolted colonies, and on the 2d October formally presented a complete plan of pacification and reconciliation with Old Spain, by means of Admiral Cockburn, who commanded the naval forces of Great Britain on the coast of Venezuela. But the passions were on both sides now so warmly excited,¹ and the interests at issue

* "It was the first object of his Majesty, on being acquainted with the revolution in Spain, to second the efforts of so brave and loyal a people, for maintaining the independence of the Spanish monarchy in all parts of the world. In conformity to these sentiments, and the obligations of justice and good faith, his Majesty *must discourage every step tending to separate the Spanish provinces in America from the mother country in Europe*. If, however, contrary to his Majesty's wishes and expectations, the Spanish states in Europe should be condemned to submit to the yoke of the common enemy, whether by real compulsion or a convention which left them only the shadow of independence, his Majesty, on the same principles, would think it his duty to render every kind of assistance to the provinces of America which should render them independent of *French Spain*."—LORD LIVERPOOL to the Governor of Curaçoa, June 20, 1810. *Ann. Reg. for 1810*, p. 230, 231.

were so important, that her mediation, though accepted by the regency, was rejected by the colonies, and from that moment all hope of accommodation was at an end.

CHAP.
LXVII.

1811.

The insurrection spread from province to province, from city to city; the insurgents were frequently defeated in their enterprises, but their expeditions seldom failed to rouse one part of the population against the other, and leave the seeds of civil war in the districts which they had visited; and from the very outset, the contest was conducted on both sides with that atrocious and cold-blooded cruelty which in every age has formed the disgraceful characteristic of Spanish history. Potosi revolted, and the Spanish authorities were shot by the population; an expedition from Buenos Ayres into Paraguay was defeated after three bloody actions, but left the seeds of insurrection in its forests; the patriots in Mexico were worsted with dreadful loss in two battles, and the insurrection was nearly suppressed in that province; but, on the other hand, Elio was shut up with his royalist garrison in Monte Video; the Indians in Peru rose in arms, and gave ample employment to the Spanish royalists in that province, who nevertheless maintained their superiority. Bloodshed, conflagration, pillage, and massacre, became universal; the "bellum plusquam civile,"* so well known and dreaded in antiquity, was experienced in all its horrors; and mutual slaughter and reprisal soon brought the contest to the atrocious usages of England during the wars of the Roses, and of Spain in the frightful contest between the Christinos and Carlists in after times.¹

60.
General
spread of
the insur-
rection.

Nov. 7.

Jan. 17.

¹ Hist. de la
Révolution
d'Espagne
en 1820,
74, 80, Ann.
Reg. 1811,
158, 164.
Ducoudray
Holstein, i.
63, 72.

A deplorable catastrophe soon after filled Spanish America with consternation, and augmented in an unexpected manner the hopes and resources of the royalist party in the New World. At three o'clock in the afternoon, on the 26th March 1812, the city of Caraccas was visited by a violent earthquake, which threw down the

61.
Earthquake
at Caraccas.

* "A worse than civil war."

CHAP.
LXVII.

1812.

chief buildings it contained, and destroyed above six thousand of its inhabitants. La Guayra, and several other towns in the province, shared in the same calamity. Its horrors were fearfully augmented by the catastrophe happening on Holy Thursday, at the very time when the churches were crowded; most of which fell, burying all within them in ruins. The scene which ensued was beyond measure frightful. In less than three minutes, a third of the town had fallen, and what remained was rendered uninhabitable. Hundreds of mutilated remains were seen crushed beneath the falling masses: while heads, projected out in every direction, prayed for aid from their fellow-citizens, who, instead of affording them any, threw themselves with loud lamentations on their faces, imploring protection from their patron saints. In five minutes not a soul was left in the houses, and the panic-struck mass was all prostrate on their faces on the ground, or flying into the fields in the neighbourhood. There, however, new objects of terror met their eyes. Huge masses of the mountains detached themselves from the summits and sides, and rolled down with a thundering crash into the valleys at their feet; deep clefts suddenly opened, disclosing frightful abysses, and sometimes after a few seconds closed again, swallowing up houses and human beings, some of whom were left with their heads and arms sticking up out of these awful graves.¹

¹ Hist. de
la Rév.
d'Amér. 84,
86. Ann.
Reg. 1812,
205.

62.
Strong re-
action it
produced
against the
Revolution.

Twenty thousand persons perished altogether in this dreadful convulsion. The minds of men, vehemently excited by the events of the revolution, were struck with consternation at this event, in itself so terrible as to be sufficient to have awakened terror in the strongest, or remorse in the most hardened minds. But recently emancipated from the bonds of despotic and the terrors of priestly authority, numbers who had been active in the cause of the insurrection thought they beheld in this event the evident hand of Providence, and the just punishment of their sins in breaking off their allegiance

to Old Spain. The priests and ecclesiastics, who already foresaw their own ruin, and perhaps that of Christianity itself, from the progress of the revolution, strongly inculcated the same ideas ; and such was the effect produced, that a general reaction in favour of the old government ensued. General Monte Verde, who commanded the royalist forces at Cora, took advantage of the discouragement of the insurgents to move against the Caraccas, and with such success that, after several lesser acquisitions, the capital itself capitulated, and three days after, its harbour, La Guayra. Miranda, whom the republicans had created dictator in this emergency, was made prisoner, in defiance of an amnesty proclaimed by the royalists, and the whole province of Venezuela submitted to the arms of Spain.¹

CHAP.
LXVII.
1813.

July 28.
July 31.
1 Ann. Reg.
1812, 205,
209, and
Chron. 39,
40. Hist. de
la Révolution
en
Amérique,
63, 87.

But terror is all powerful with men only while it continues ; the recollection of the most dreadful disasters is ere long lost in the presence of succeeding interests, or the craving of daily wants. The Spaniards made a cruel use of their victory. The prisons soon overflowed ; private houses were converted into temporary places of detention ; the amnesty solemnly proclaimed was violated. The baseness of denunciation appeared in the royalist ranks ; and blood, after the contest was over, flowed in frightful streams on the scaffold. In this extremity a second rebellion broke out, more formidable than the former, for it was founded on despair, and stimulated by revenge. A hero arose whose name is indissolubly connected with the cause of South American independence. BOLIVAR,*

63.
Sketch of
the war
which ter-
minated in
the indepen-
dence of
Columbia.

* Don Simon Bolivar was born at Caraccas on the 24th July 1783, of a noble family. The youngest of four children, who were left orphans in 1789, having lost both their father and mother, his education was at first much neglected ; but being endowed by nature with an ardent and ambitious disposition, he redeemed the time he had lost at the age of fourteen, when sent to an uncle at Madrid, and engaged with ardour in the study of literature and the exact sciences. At eighteen he fell in love with his cousin, Donna Theresa, whom he married, in spite of the remonstrances of his relations, but whom he had the misfortune to lose five months after their nuptials. Though suffering severely at this bereavement, he yet did not sink under his grief, but resumed with ardour his philosophical studies. His ardent and vehement tempera-

CHAP.
LXVII.

1813.

June 6,
1813.Aug. 4,
1813.¹ Ducon-
dray Hol-
stein, i. 81,
140. Hist.
de la Rév.
d'Amér.
89, 90.

who had retreated from La Guayra to New Granada, which still continued the contest, soon appeared on the plains of Venezuela at the head of six thousand men, composed partly of volunteers from New Granada, partly of fugitives from Caraccas and La Guayra, whom the cruelties of the Spaniards had driven to despair. Disregarding the defeat of a large body of auxiliary horse, whom the royalists routed, the Independent general advanced rapidly towards the capital, defeated Monte Verde at Cacuta, and entered Caraccas in triumph on the 4th August 1813, making fifteen hundred Spanish troops prisoners.¹

64.
First suc-
cess of Bo-
livar, and
his cruelty.

The joy of the inhabitants at this deliverance made them forget for a time the horrors of the earthquake; the prisons were opened, the royalists banished, their property confiscated, and the army recruited by a large body of needy republicans, whom the revolutionary troubles had deprived of bread, or victorious cruelty had inspired with the thirst for vengeance. Bolivar, finding he could not prevail on Monte Verde to consent to an exchange of prisoners, took a frightful revenge by murdering his captives in cold blood. The war continued for some years after with various success in Venezuela—for Monte Verde retained his footing in the interior of

ment, however, impelled him ere long into the more attractive career of earthly ambition; he devoured the histories of the French Revolution, dreamed of Washington and Franklin, and, repairing to Paris in 1804, drank in deep draughts of ambition on beholding the crowning of Napoleon in 1804, and the placing the iron crown on his brow the following year in the cathedral of Milan. The freedom and republican character of his language in reference to these events attracted the notice of the police, and he only escaped imprisonment by the aid of powerful friends, who screened him from the myrmidons of Fouché. Escaped from these perils, he surrendered himself to the pleasures of Paris; and after travelling in Germany, where he made the acquaintance of the illustrious Humboldt, he returned to Spain, and subsequently traversed North America: and at length, returning home, resumed the indolent life of the nobles of Caraccas, till the troubles broke out in 1808. Though he was then a colonel of militia, as his father had been in Aragua, he at first took no part in the divisions which ensued, and treated the first efforts of independence, which terminated in the revolution of 19th April 1810, as a chimerical attempt. Being secretly inclined, however, to the cause of independence, and solicited by his friends to take office under the new government,

the country—and with an incredible amount of cruelty inflicted, and suffering borne, by both the contending parties. But the authority of the Independents in that province was never again destroyed, and Bolivar, who after his glorious success had the magnanimity to lay down the dictatorship with which the necessities of his countrymen had invested him, was obliged to resume it again from their gratitude.¹

CHAP.
LXVII.

1813.

¹ Hist. de la Révolution, 89, 90. Ducondray Holstein, i. 81, 166.

To all appearance the revolutionary party in Venezuela was now established on a solid foundation ; and so they might have been if they had used their victory with justice and humanity. But instead of doing this, they continued the war with a degree of barbarity exceeding anything recorded in civilised history, and outstripping even the atrocities of the French Revolution. By a proclamation issued by the Independent government from Carthagena on the 13th January 1813, it was declared that the whole property, movable and immovable, of the Spanish royalists should be confiscated, one-half to the state, one-fourth to the officers, and the other fourth to the soldiers engaged against them ; and that every soldier who presented twenty Spanish heads should be made an ensign, if thirty a lieutenant, if fifty a captain.* The barbarity of ancient warfare has no such atrocious

65.
Atrocities of the Revolutionists, and reaction in favour of the Spaniards.

Jan. 13,
1813.

he at length agreed to go to London as one of the deputies from Venezuela to the British government in 1810, when Lord Wellesley gave them the same answer as Lord Liverpool had done, and explained that England could take no part in any attempt to dismember the Spanish monarchy. In the following year, however, he embarked in the cause of the revolution with General Miranda, who was now made dictator, and fought several actions against Monte Verde ; but, after the fall of Caraccas, he took part with the royalists in the arrest of the former general, which has affixed a dark stain on his memory. Subsequently, however, the cruelties and perfidy of the Spaniards again drove him to arms, and thenceforward his biography becomes the annals of the War of Independence in South America.—See *Biographie Universelle*, Sup. lviii. 497, 499.

* “Comme le but principal de cette guerre est de détruire à Venezuela la maudite race des Espagnols, sans excepter les Canariens : pour avoir droit à une récompense, ou à un grade, il suffira de présenter un certain nombre de têtes d’Espagnols d’Europe, ou d’Insulaires des Canaries. Le soldat qui présentera vingt têtes sera fait enseigne en activité ; trente têtes vaudront le grade de lieutenant, cinquante celui de capitaine. Les propriétés des Espagnols d’Europe

CHAP.
LXVII.

1814.

Feb. 8,
1814.

¹ Mém. de Murillo, 510. Bolivar, Hist. de la Révolution, 91, 92. Hist. de Bolivar, par Duconray Holstein, i. 159.

66.
Successes of the royalists in Venezuela under Murillo.

code of military law to present: it exceeds even the usages of the Turks, for they paid for those heads only which were cut off in battle; but the regenerators of the New World offered rewards for all Spanish heads indiscriminately, whether of soldiers or pacific citizens. Nor did these atrocious edicts remain a dead letter. On the 8th of February 1814, eight hundred and twenty-three Spaniards, in great part old men, sick, some bed-ridden, and many whose lives had done honour to their country, were condemned to death by Bolivar at Caraccas, and four hundred and thirty at La Guayra, for no other crime but their birth; and on the 14th and 15th of the same month, they were all murdered on the public place of execution. Some were so old and infirm that they could not stand, and they were shot bound to chairs. Such were the auspices under which freedom arose in Spanish America.^{1*}

Such unheard-of atrocities had the usual effect of rendering the opposite party desperate, and rousing anew the wellnigh extinguished flame of civil war. A dreadful guerilla contest sprang up in every part of Venezuela, which involved the whole of that beautiful country in unutterable wo, and soon reduced, by two hundred thousand, the number of its inhabitants. Meanwhile the Spanish government, at length relieved from the pressure of the war with Napoleon by the peace of Paris, prepared to take decisive steps to reassert their dominion

enclavées dans le territoire délivré, seront divisées en quatre parts; l'une pour les officiers qui feront partie de l'expédition, et qui auront assisté à la première affaire; la seconde part aux soldats en affranchissement; le reste reviendra à l'état. Les biens seront répartis sur-le-champ dans chaque ville où entrèrent les troupes républicaines; les meubles que l'on ne saurait ni emporter ni séparer facilement seront vendus à l'encan."—*Proclamation, signé 16 Jan. 1813*; ANTONIO BORIENO, *Mémoires de MURILLO*, v.

* "Cette sentence fut effectivement exécutée à l'égard de 1253 Espagnols, tant prisonniers de guerre que marchands, ou exerçant d'autres professions, lesquels n'avaient jamais pris les armes contre le dictateur, (Bolivar,) et étaient établis à Curaçoa et à Laguera — 823 de ces condamnés furent fusillés à Caraccas, et 430 à Guayra. Ces exécutions eurent lieu aux trois jours désignés par le dictateur, sans qu'aucune forme de justice fût remplie. Le dictateur ne

over the New World. General Murillo, the best of their commanders, trained in the school of Wellington, set sail from Cadiz in 1815 at the head of twelve thousand men, and arrived in the beginning of April at Cumanna, where he joined Morales, who, at the head of a motley group of four thousand Indians, Mulattoes, and Negroes, with a few hundred Spaniards who had escaped from the massacre, still maintained the royalist standard. So great a reinforcement speedily changed the face of affairs. The royalists immediately commenced the reorganisation of their troops, and soon after resumed the offensive. Carthagenas was invested and taken after a dreadful siege of four months, in which the republicans underwent the extremity of suffering.¹*

CHAP.
LXVII.

1815.

¹ Murillo's
Memoirs,
72, 1814.
Biog. Univ.
lviii. 510,
512.

The clemency displayed by Murillo on this occasion brightly contrasted with the barbarity of the Independents. Property was respected, no executions except of a few chiefs followed his victory. Caraccas and the whole sea-coast speedily fell into his hands; the insurgents, broken into separate bands, were driven into the pathless wilds in the interior; and Bolivar was constrained to fly to Jamaica, to endeavour to raise funds for a renewal of the war, from the English merchants who favoured the cause of the Independents. Soon after, however, a fresh insurrection broke out in the island of Marguerita, in which the fugitives from Carthagenas had taken refuge.² A new and formidable partisan, PAEZ, appeared on the side of

^{67.} Noble clemency displayed by Murillo. Jan. 15, 1816.² Murillo, Mém. 72, 219. Biog. Univ. lviii. 510, 512. (Sup. Bolivar.) Ducondray Holstein, i. 200, 330.

voulut attendre aucune représentation—il avait prononcé irrévocablement leur sort. Parmi les victimes de cette terrible sentence se trouvaient des hommes de 80 ans et plus, qui, à cause de leur grand âge, ou de leurs infirmités, ne pouvaient marcher: ceux-ci furent mis dans un fauteuil, auquel on les attachait fortement, et conduits au lieu de l'exécution." These are the words of the republican general in the service of Venezuela, the biographer of Bolivar, Ducondray Holstein, (i. 59.)

* "The horrible appearance of the city when taken," says an eyewitness, "can hardly be described: the streets and the houses were encumbered with the dead and the dying; the atmosphere was so pestilential when we entered as almost to impede respiration; groans and lamentations were heard on all sides."—GEN. MONKTON to the *Spanish Government*, Jan. 15, 1816; *Hist. de la Révol. Amér.* 122; and *Mémoires de MURILLO*, 62, 63.

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LXVII.

1818.

the Independents, at the head of the redoubtable Gaucho horse from the Pampas ; and after three years of obstinate and bloody hostilities, in the course of which Venezuela suffered beyond example, both from friend and foe, although the capital and chief strongholds were in the hands of the Spaniards, a frightful Vendean warfare ravaged almost the whole interior of its immense provinces.

68.
Insidious
assistance
given to
the insur-
gents by the
British.

It was in this dubious state of the deplorable contest, when victory had declared decidedly in favour of neither party, but the scales rather preponderated to the side of the royalists, that Great Britain appeared, covertly and insidiously, but most effectively, in the struggle. The excitement of the war had now passed away, and with it in some degree the noble spirit in the people, and the fidelity to engagements in the government, which its dangers had called forth. Distress had prevailed widely in the country from the fall in the price of commodities, resulting from the rise in the value of money which followed the monetary bill of 1819, and the severe contraction of the currency by which it had been for three years preceded. Commercial embarrassment, equally with its cupidity, anticipated the opening of an inexhaustible field for the operations of trade in the boundless realms of independent Spanish America ; and political necessity, not less than insidious liberalism, had in some degree loosened the principles of integrity in the government. Loans to a great extent were in consequence advanced by the English capitalists to the insurgent authorities ; and stations were openly appointed at London, Dublin, Glasgow, Liverpool, and all the principal towns in the empire, to enrol recruits for British legions to serve in South America. These troops soon acquired a most formidable consistency from the number of the discharged veterans of Wellington's army who were included in their ranks, and who communicated to them the inestimable advantages of experience and discipline.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1819, 242,
243.

Above ten thousand men, a large proportion of whom were Peninsular veterans, were sent out at different times in the years 1817, 1819, and 1820, although not more than half that number ever appeared in the field, from the dreadful mortality with which they were affected in the unhealthy island of Marguerita, where their principal depot was stationed. Yet even this inconsiderable number doubled the real strength of Bolivar's troops, now sorely reduced by sickness, fatigue, and the sword. They were divided into three legions: the first, three thousand strong, commanded by Colonel Hippeley, was, from jealousy of their force, blended with Bolivar's other divisions; the second, numbering two thousand five hundred, under Colonel English, and the third, of five thousand, chiefly Irish, under General Devereux, were allowed to remain together. These brave men joined the cause of the Independents in great part from the natural sympathy of the English heart with the cause of freedom all over the world, and the restlessness of ardent spirits chafing against the weary inaction of a pacific life. But it must ever be considered a dark stain on the English government, that they permitted such powerful succour to be sent to rebels against a closely allied state, not only without hindrance, but with tacit approbation; and that the British legions which finally achieved the dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy in the New World embarked in great part from the Thames, under the immediate eye of the Administration.¹

While the resources of Bolivar and the insurgents were thus doubled by the powerful succours in men and money obtained from Great Britain, the revolutionary spirit which had been fermenting in Cadiz and in the Spanish army, ever since the promulgation of the fatal constitution of 1812, produced an ebullition which in the same ratio reduced those of the royalists, and in its ultimate results has involved Spain in unheard-of calamities. Slowly, but with great

CHAP.
LXVII.

1819.

69.

Description
of the British
auxiliary force.1 Duecondray
Holstein, ii.
115, 120,
Ann. Reg.
1819, 242,
243.

70.

Mutiny in
the Isle of
Leon.

CHAP.
LXVII.

1819.

¹ Mém. de
Murillo,
229, 240.
Hist. de la
Rév. 1820,
153, 171.

71.
Which leads
to a revolution
at
Madrid.
June 7,
1819.

Jan. 5,
1820.
² Hist. de la
Révolution
de 1820,
153, 171.
Mém. de
Murillo,
230, 240.
Ann. Reg.
1819, 179,
180; and
1820, 221,
227.

72.
Increased
force of the
Independents
in
Columbia.

perseverance, the Spanish government had been preparing a powerful expedition at Cadiz to reinforce Murillo, on a scale of such magnitude as, if it had reached the shores of the New World, must at once have crushed the insurrection. But during the long sojourn of the troops at Cadiz, in consequence of the penury of the Spanish treasury, and the extraordinary difficulty they experienced in fitting out the expedition, the troops became infected with the contagion of revolutionary principles, and appalled by the frightful accounts sedulously spread amongst them by the democrats of that place, of the sufferings and wasting away of the royalist forces in the New World.¹

The consequence was, that, on the night of the 7th June 1819, the whole troops in the Isle of Leon broke out into open mutiny, refusing to obey their orders, or embark for the seat of war in America. The revolt was at the moment checked by the vigour and decision of the Conde d'Abisbal, (O'Donnell,) who suddenly surrounded the insurgent camp with a smaller body of troops, who remained true to their colours; but nevertheless this event proved fatal to the expedition, as it was found necessary to disperse the mutineers through the towns in Andalusia, and they could not again be assembled. And on the 5th January 1820, matters were brought to a crisis by the revolt of the whole army, twenty thousand strong, destined for South America—an event which was followed by a revolution in the government at Madrid, and the resignation by General Murillo, who was so deeply implicated with the royalist party, of the command he had so long maintained with such resolution in the New World.²

The influence of these events on the contest in the Venezuelan plains speedily appeared. Swelled by the formidable British auxiliaries, the troops under Bolivar ere long mustered fifteen thousand sabres and bayonets; while those under La Torre, who, on the resignation of Murillo, had received the command, were reduced by

CHAP.
LXVII.
1821.

sickness, fatigue, and the sword, to six thousand. Yet even this diminutive band maintained its ground for eighteen months longer in the country: thus affording decisive evidence that the mass of the people in Venezuela, worn out by revolution and suffering, were far from being hearty in the cause, and that it was domestic treachery and foreign interference, not native vigour, which ultimately decided the contest. But at length the British auxiliaries asserted the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, and, for good or for evil, determined the independence of Spanish America. In June 1821, the Spaniards, four thousand strong, were posted in a strong position near CARABOBO, where they were watched by Bolivar at the head of eight thousand men, of whom twelve hundred were British auxiliaries, chiefly Peninsular veterans, and three thousand were cavalry from the Pampas. For twenty days the Spaniards in their strong position set the enemy at defiance, and Bolivar did not venture to attack them; but at length secret information was sent him of a circuitous path by which the right of the Spanish position might be turned. The flower of the army, comprehending the whole British auxiliaries, was despatched under the resolute guidance of General Paez on this perilous expedition.¹

¹ Ducondray
Holstein, ii.
229, 230.
Ann. Reg.
1821.

Dreadful hardships were encountered, especially by the British, in the course of the march. Obligated to advance in Indian file along a narrow path, the feet of the soldiers were so lacerated by the sharp flint rocks which they met at every step, that their shoes were soon cut through, and their feet covered with blood. Upon this these resolute men took off their shirts, tore them in pieces, and with their feet thus bandaged continued their march. Such perseverance was not long of meeting with its reward. Arriving unperceived on the right flank of the Spanish position, La Torre at once saw his defences and intrenchments rendered useless; but he instantly directed a new formation to the right, and prepared to combat on equal

73.
Battle of
Carabobo.
June 26.

CHAP.
LXVII.

1821.

terms the assailing force. The Columbians, who formed the first line, were speedily broken by the royal regiment of Burgos; the lancers of Paez were so exhausted by their long and painful march, that the horses were unable to move. Everything depended on the British auxiliaries; and the Spaniards, deeming the victory secure, advanced with loud shouts against the second line, where they were placed, taking them for Creoles, and anticipating an easy triumph over them. No sooner were they within gunshot, than they opened a heavy fire of musketry, which was well sustained though vigorously returned; and soon after, still taking the enemy for Creoles, surprised at the resistance, they advanced with levelled bayonets. But they soon discovered their mistake. At the same instant the word "Charge!" was given in the British line: and the Spaniards, as they advanced in disorder to achieve what they deemed an easy victory, beheld with dismay the dense and steady line of the English emerging, with deafening cheers and levelled bayonets, through the smoke. That charge decided the fate of South America. The Spaniards, thunderstruck, broke and fled; the British followed in close pursuit, and though unsupported—Paez's horse being unable to follow up the advantage—did terrible execution with their bayonets. The Spanish general Morales, who was at the head of fifteen hundred horse, envious of La Torre for having received the superior command, unhappily held back, and never charged the victors when disordered by their rush. Some Spanish brigs, which opened a heavy fire on the flank of the British, were driven off by repeated volleys of musketry. La Torre's men broke and fled on all sides, leaving their camp, cannon, and ammunition in the hands of the victors. Not four hundred of the Spanish troops found refuge in the walls of Porto Cabello.¹

¹ Ducondray
Holstein, ii.
238, 242.
Ann. Reg.
1821, 263,
264.

Every one now saw that the royalist cause was ruined in Venezuela. Despair at the defeat of La Torre, and the jealousy of Morales, filled every heart with conster-

nation ; and in a few weeks after this overthrow, twenty thousand inhabitants of Caraccas, La Guayra, and Porto Cabello, fled from their country and took refuge in the adjacent West India islands. Caraccas was immediately evacuated, and occupied by the Independents ; Carthagena, closely besieged, surrendered in the end of September ; Porto Cabello, where La Torre commanded in person, held out longer, but was at length reduced ; and the victorious Bolivar, formally installed in the republican government in the capital, proclaimed the independence of Columbia. But he found the principal towns deserted ; not a white man was to be seen in the streets ; misery and desolation universally prevailed ; and the sanguinary dictator, terrified at the emigration of eighty thousand Spaniards, comprising the best families and whole wealth of Venezuela, in vain issued proclamations conjuring them to remain under the republican government.^{1*}

CHAP.
LXVII.

1824.

74.

General
despair
of the
Spaniards.
June 29.
Sept. 21.June 16,
1824.¹Ducon-
dray
Holstein, ii.
238, 245.
Ann. Reg.
1821, 263,
265.

The contest for South American freedom was virtually decided on the Venezuelan plains ; but after the independence of Columbia had been secured, much still remained to be done to push the victory to its remote consequences. A dreadful contest had for six years desolated Peru and Chili, in the latter of which SAN MARTIN had organised a republican government, and neither party could yet boast of a decided advantage on that side of the Andes ; the Royalist standards still flying in the former country, and the Independents having gained nearly entire possession of the latter. Don José de San Martin was born in Yapeya, in Paraguay, in 1779. Being greatly beloved by all ranks, he was placed at the head of the forces of Buenos Ayres, when an invasion of Chili, to aid the republicans of that province in establishing their independence, was resolved on in December 1816. By incre-

75.
San Martin
establishes
the indepen-
dence of
Chili.

* " L'émigration générale m'a causé la plus profonde douleur. Vous n'avez pu fuir et abandonner vos propriétés, par un mouvement spontané ; non que cette fuite, cet abandonnement, pût être causé par la crainte que vous inspiraient les armées de la Colombie ou celles des Espagnols."—*Proclamation par BOLIVAR, 3d July 1821 ; DUCONDRAY HOLSTEIN, ii. 245.*

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1824.

dible efforts, and no small exertion of skill, he equipped and led across the Andes a corps of four thousand men, with which he attacked and totally defeated the royalist troops at Chacabuco, on February 12, 1817. This great success led to the immediate establishment of an independent government in Chili, of which he was elected president and commander-in-chief. He accepted, however, only the latter situation, and suggested for the former General O'Higgins, who was accordingly appointed. The remnant of the Spanish army took refuge in a fortified sea-port, Talcahuana; but being reinforced by five thousand veterans from Peru, they sallied forth eight thousand strong, in spring 1818, and on 19th March totally defeated and dispersed the Independent forces. Such, however, was the vigour of San Martin and O'Higgins, that the broken remains of their troops were quickly reassembled; and on the 5th April 1818, only seventeen days after their former disaster, they attacked and worsted the royalists at Maypo. From that day the independence of Chili was secured, though the Spaniards still maintained their ground in Peru.¹

¹ Hall's
South Amer.
i. 55, 57.

76.
Prolonged
contest in
Peru.

Encouraged by this success, the republicans fitted out an expedition, the naval part of which was under the able direction of Lord Cochrane, who, after his dismissal from the service of Great Britain, had entered that of the Spanish insurgents, to rouse the Peruvians to assert their independence; and in the first instance gained considerable successes, and established themselves in the most important towns on the sea-coast. Subsequently, however, the Spanish troops had gained with ease three considerable victories; and it was evident that, without external aid, the unwarlike Peruvians would sink before the resolution of the royalists. Urgent representations of this state of matters were made, and the decisive success gained in Venezuela enabled succours to be sent. In May 1824, however, the triumph of the Independents in Columbia having been completed by the fall of Porto

Cabello, preparations were made for detaching a powerful expedition across the Andes to co-operate in the expulsion of the Spaniards from the fastnesses of Upper Peru, where Generals Canterac, Valdez, and Oloneta, with fifteen thousand men, still kept the field, watched by the army of the Independents, about ten thousand strong.¹

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¹ Miller, ii.
110, 113.
Ann. Reg.
1824.

Incredible were the hardships undergone by the republican troops in crossing the Andes. The liberating army, under Bolivar in person, assembled near Huaras, in July 1824, to the number of ten thousand men, and advanced in three divisions to commence the formidable task of surmounting the Cordilleras. Their baggage equipment had previously been rigorously reduced to the lowest state, so that the troops were as lightly accoutred as it was possible for men to be ; and Bolivar's excellent regulations had placed every department in the most efficient state. The difficulties to be encountered, however, far exceeded those which opposed either Hannibal or Napoleon in the passage of the Alps. For a hundred leagues the tracks already existing required to be made into roads, and sheds to be erected at intervals in the long barren uninhabited tracts, for shelter to the men and animals at the shivering elevation of ten and twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. By the indefatigable exertions of General Sucrè, the second in command, these difficulties were all overcome, and wood for fuel, with magazines of barley and Indian corn, were collected in the sheds which are stationed at intervals in those awful solitudes to afford the weary traveller shelter and repose.²

77.
Preparations for an expedition across the Andes into Peru.

² Miller,
128, 129,

Still, the sufferings of the men in the long and toilsome ascent were extreme. The paths wound up steep ravines or clefts between precipices of frightful depth, surmounted on either side by inaccessible rocks, starting up into every imaginable and fantastic form. The shelving ledges which afforded the only foot-hold on the rugged sides of the Andes were so narrow, as to compel

78.
Passage of the Andes.

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LXVII.

1824.

the troops to go whole days' journeys in single file, and often spread a regiment over several miles. The deep gulleys or breaks in the tracks, formed by projecting rocks or waterfalls, required to be wound round with extreme caution; a single false step was certain death; and numbers, slipping their feet, were precipitated before the eyes of their comrades hundreds of fathoms down the bare ledges of rock, and perished miserably. Many corps, in spite of the utmost efforts to keep them right, missed their way, and wandered for days up frightful watercourses, without either meeting with their comrades or finding provisions. It was only by constant sounding of the trumpets, and incessant hallooing from one corps to another, that the troops were prevented from being lost amidst the mists and snow-storms of those pathless solitudes. At length, however, all their difficulties were overcome, and Bolivar reviewed his forces, nine thousand strong, on the plain between Rancas and Passo, at the height of twelve thousand feet above the sea.¹

¹ General
Miller, ii.
118, 120.

79.
Splendid
review on
the plateau
of Rancas.

Never were forces assembled under more animating circumstances, than the Independent army on this memorable occasion. The view from the table-land on which they stood is perhaps the most magnificent in the world. On the east lay the Andes, whose tremendous ridges had just been surmounted with so much toil; on the west started up endless peaks of the Cordilleras, some wrapt in clouds, others resplendent with glittering snow. North and south the plain was bounded by stupendous chains of mountains, with their summits reposing above the clouds. The troops were assembled on the banks of the noble lake of Reyes, the principal source of the mighty stream of the Amazons. Among the men who were there reviewed, were veterans of all nations; some who had stormed the great redoubt at Borodino—a few who had witnessed the conflagration of Moscow and the capture of Paris; many who had combated on the Douro and the Garonne; others who had surmounted

the Pyrenees, and survived the carnage of Waterloo. But all were now animated with one spirit ; long service together, difficulties bravely surmounted, hardships endured in common, had created a new bond of union ; and a unanimous shout of enthusiasm burst from all, when the address of the Liberator was read at the head of each regiment, which promised immediate victory, the deliverance of Peru, and the final emancipation of South America, as the reward of their strenuous efforts.¹

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¹ Miller, ii.
128, 129,
Annuaire
Historique,
1821, 591.

Had Canterac and Valdez, with their numerous veteran troops, attacked the head of Bolivar's columns as they debouched, almost in single file, from the gorges of the Andes, they must have achieved an easy victory. But, misled by the facility with which they had routed several bodies of the Independents in recent actions, they had conceived an undue contempt for their adversaries, made no attempt to unite, and allowed the precious time to pass by without a shot being fired. Roused at length from his slumber, by the appearance of their troops in force on the west of the Andes, Canterac resolved to attack the Independent army alone, as they emerged from the defiles ; and on the 5th, the royalist army, seven thousand strong, was discerned in their front on the plain of Junin. But the Independents were already extricated from the straits, and Canterac, finding the enemy in greater strength than he expected, placed his cavalry to cover his retreat, and fell back. In an instant the saddles were shifted to the led horses, which were comparatively fresh ; the long Columbian lance was in the horsemen's hands, and the formidable Gauchos of the Pampas prepared to contend with the veteran cavaliers of Spain. The Spaniards, led by Canterac in person, made a masterly charge, and attacked the Independents with such vigour that their cavalry were at first routed, and the royalist horse broke in pursuit. Sucrè skilfully took advantage of this circumstance ; the republicans rallied, and the strength and skill of

80.
Battle of
Junin.
Aug. 5.

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1824.

the South American horsemen, in the single combats to which the contest was now reduced, more than compensated this first success of the Spaniards. After a terrible shock, in which each could boast of some success, both parties retired, the Spaniards having lost four hundred, the Columbians two hundred and fifty killed and wounded. The charm of the Spanish cavalry was broken by this action, in which they had upon the whole been worsted by the hardy Gauchos of the Pampas. But still the condition of Bolivar's army was very critical, without magazines, in a mountainous country, with the royalist army, of nearly double its own strength, in front, and the sterile ridges of the Andes in rear.¹

¹ Miller, ii.
131, 139.
Ann. Hist.
1824, 581.
Ann. Reg.
1824, 228.

81.
Approach to
Ayacucho.

Both parties, inspired with mutual respect, remained in a state of inactivity after this severe shock; but the royalists in the end retired, Bolivar extended his quarters, and, deeming the campaign over, put his troops into cantonments, and himself retired to Lima, to attend to affairs on the coast. Meanwhile Canterac and Valdez, now thoroughly alarmed, effected a junction by an extraordinary march of the latter, and with their united force, twelve thousand strong, advanced against the Independent army, now mustering not more than six thousand lances and bayonets. Alarmed at such a fearful superiority of force, Sucre gradually retired, till he was driven up with his back to the Andes, in circumstances apparently desperate. Canterac and Valdez followed him closely, and on the afternoon of the 8th December occupied the heights of Condorkanki,* twelve thousand feet above the sea, in such strength as to render the situation of the republicans gloomy in the extreme. Their army occupied the plain of Ayacucho, at the foot of the gigantic wall of Condorkanki, now bristling with the sabres and bayonets of the royalists;²

² Miller, ii.
163, 164.

* Condorkanki, in the language of the country, means "worthy of the Condor."—MILLER, ii. 165.

behind these rose the vast mountain range of the Cordilleras, which rendered all escape impossible. Deeming victory secure, the royalist generals approached the Independent outposts, and invited them to surrender—a proposition which was indignantly rejected.

The morning of the 9th was cold and clear, and when the sun rose above the mountains, his rays shone on as gallant a host in either army as ever contended for the dominion of a mighty continent. The soldiers on both sides were observed rubbing their hands, and exhibiting every mark of satisfaction that this protracted contest was drawing to a termination. With the officers on either side it was literally a question of life or death: for the usages of civilised war had ceased between these ruthless foes, and the dungeon and the scaffold appeared in certain prospect to the defeated army. At nine o'clock the royalists with great difficulty descended the steep precipices of Condorkanki, the cavalry leading their horses, the infantry clinging by their hands to the cliffs down which they were moving; on seeing which General Sucre, who commanded the Independent forces, addressed a few animating words to his men, reminding them that upon their efforts that day depended the fate of South America, and that he was assured another day of glory was about to crown their constancy. General Cordova led on the republican cavalry, exclaiming, as he advanced with his hat in his hand, "Adelante paso de vencedores!"—"On with the step of conquerors!" On the other side the Viceroy, at the head of the steady Spanish infantry, descended the mountain and advanced to the attack.¹

The Columbian infantry met them nothing daunted—for the long warfare had made the troops on both sides excellent—and for a few minutes a terrible contest ensued. Soon, however, the Independents prevailed; the Spanish foot were driven back to the steeps of Condorkanki with great slaughter, and numbers dropped under the Colum-

CHAP.
LXVII.1824.
Dec. 8.82.
Decisive
battle of
Ayacucho.
Dec. 9.¹ Miller, ii.
167, 168.
Sucre's Off.
Acc. Ann.
Hist. 1824,
711.83.
Victory of
the Inde-
pendents.

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LXVII.

1824.

bian fire as they clambered up its rugged sides. In the confusion the Viceroy was wounded and made prisoner. But Valdez, who had not hitherto engaged, opened a heavy fire on the now disordered Independents; two royalist battalions, fresh and in firm array, descended the cliffs and routed the Peruvian insurgents, who were in hot pursuit; the Spanish foot rallied, hurled their assailants down the rocks, and pursued them with loud cries of victory across the plain. All seemed lost. At this critical instant General Miller, whose brigade was the last republican reserve, and who commanded the horse, led the hussars of Junin to charge the victorious royalists in flank: the Spaniards were quickly broken, their artillery taken, and the infantry dispersed. Fourteen hundred of the royalists were killed, seven hundred, with the Viceroy, made prisoners, and fifteen guns taken. But the republican loss of eleven hundred killed and wounded, out of less than six thousand who engaged, showed at what a hazard the Independents had contended; and in the decisive struggle the independence of South America was won by the lances of the Pampas, led by the firmness and skill of an English general.^{1*}

¹ Miller, ii.
167, 170.
Ann. Hist.
1824, 583,
585. Sucré's
Acc. Ibid.
711. Ann.
Reg. 1821,
210.

84.
Capitulation
of Ayacucho;
and revolution
in Mexico.

Aug. 14,
1826.

This battle decided the fate of South America. A capitulation was immediately entered into by Canterac, in virtue of which the whole of Peru and Chili was surrendered to the Independents, and the Spanish forces were bound to evacuate entirely both provinces. Rodil, who commanded the fortress of Callao, refused to recognise the capitulation, and prolonged for two years more the defence of that stronghold; but at length he too was forced to capitulate, after a heroic and most resolute defence. Mexico followed the impulse given by those

* It is an instance of Spanish gratitude that the name of General Miller, to whose skill and courage this victory was mainly owing, is never mentioned in the Spanish official account, though it is admitted that it was the hussars of Junin whom he commanded who won the victory.—See SUCRÉ'S *Official Account, Annuaire Historique*, 1824, 710, 711.

decisive events. An insurrection against the royal authority in that province had, indeed, commenced so early as 1810, and was carried on with various success till 1819, when it was almost extinguished. The next year, however, the accounts received of the revolution in Spain caused such a general ferment that the revolt broke out afresh ; and all proposals for a compromise with the old country being rejected by the Cortes at Madrid, the insurgents prevailed, and ITURBIDE their leader was elected emperor in May 1822. Disputes soon arising between him and his congress, he abdicated the throne and left the country, when a republican government was, in 1823, established in this splendid region, by whose independence the Spanish authority was finally extinguished in the New World.^{1*}

¹ Ann. Hist.
1824, 711,
App. and
Ann. Rec.
1824, 214,
216.

Thus was accomplished, from the results of the French invasion of Spain, the ultimate independence of South America—a result so vast and important as to justify the historian in outstepping the period which his narrative in general embraces, and tracing out, in a slight sketch, those momentous changes to their termination. Never was a revolution which was looked to with more anxiety over the whole civilised world, or one from which more important results to the best interests of humanity was anticipated. And what has been the result ? It has, hitherto at least, been calamitous in the extreme. Unprepared for freedom by the previous exercise of even the smallest of its rights ; mingling in their bosoms the pride of Castilian descent with the fierce passions of Creole blood ; without any rational religion to restrain their excesses ; generally ignorant, and universally stained with revolutionary crime, the South Americans have fallen into a series of political calamities almost without a parallel. They have become

85.
Disastrous
revolution-
ary troubles,
and vast de-
cline of po-
pulation, in
which these
changes
have issued.

* The fate of Iturbide was very melancholy. In July 1824 he was induced, by the hope of being useful to his country in the event of an attempt being made to reconquer it by Spain, to return to Mexico, where, in pursuance of a decree made by the republican government in his absence, and with the existence of which he was unacquainted, he was immediately arrested and shot.

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LXVII.

1826.

the victims of revolutions so frequent, of civil dissensions so incessant, that history, in despair, has ceased attempting to trace their thread; and the awful interval of obscure bloodshed and devastation may be darkly judged of from the following appalling facts. The depopulation of the South American states during the continuance of the contest has been such, that, in the richest and most important of them, the number of the people at its close was little above *a half* of what it had been when the revolution began.* Some of the greatest cities which it contained have been unpeopled; almost all have been reduced to a moiety of their former number of inhabitants.† The mines, both in Mexico and Peru, for long ceased to be worked; and the population of the town of Potosi, maintained by their labour, had sunk from a hundred and fifty thousand to *eight thousand* inhabitants.‡ Commerce, sharing in the general ruin, has so signally declined, that, ten years after the contest with Old Spain had entirely ceased, the foreign trade of the emancipated states was not half of what it had been with Europe before the contest began; and, instead of increasing under the

* "La population de Caraccas avant les dernières révolutions était évaluée à près d'un million d'habitants, dont 200,000 Espagnols, 450,000 gens de couleur libres, 60,000 esclaves, et 280,000 Indiens. Aujourd'hui cette partie de la Colombie forme les trois départements de l'Orénoque, de Venezuela, et de Sulie, dont la population par suite des discordes civiles a été réduite à 557,000 âmes."—MALTE-BRUN, xi. 512.

	1810.	1826.
† "Population de la cité de Caraccas, . . .	31,813	21,400
— Calabrosa, . . .	30,783	18,000
— Bogota, . . .	80,000	50,000

"Margarita avait perdu 5000 habitans; le district de Barcelonne, 12,000; Maracaybo, 6000; Coro, 4000; enfin, le nombre des individus périés par la guerre et la famine, depuis 1810, se monte dans les seuls pays que nous venons de nommer, au nombre de 200,000. Qu'on juge par comparaison de ce qu'il doit avoir péri d'hommes dans les autres provinces."—*Histoire de la Révolution de 1820 en Espagne*, par CH.—(a republican writer,) p. 19; and DUCONDRAÏ HOLSTEIN, i. 23.

‡ "The town of Potosi contained, so early as 1611, 150,000 inhabitants. By the abolition of the meta, and the shocks which wealthy establishments received during the Revolution, it was reduced in 1825 to 8000."—GENERAL MILLER'S *Memoirs*, ii. 239.

influence of republican institutions, it is still in most places diminishing.*

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LXVII.

1826.

86.

Almost entire stoppage of the mines of gold and silver, and the disastrous effects flowing from it.

Important as the effects of the great diminution of the trade of Europe with the South American republics were to the whole commercial world, this importance was greatly enhanced by the prodigious diminution in the supply of the precious metals for the general intercourse of nations, which resulted from these disastrous convulsions. It has been already mentioned, that the mines in America supplied, previous to the Spanish revolution, 43,000,000 piastres, or about £10,000,000 a-year, being nine-tenths of the whole supply of the globe. But in consequence of the revolutionary troubles, which continued for fourteen years, and the destruction of capital and industry consequent on them, the supply from the mines, both in Mexico and Peru, was so much diminished, that for many years it did not exceed a fifth part of what it had formerly been, and in some years was hardly a tenth.† For several years the great mines of Mexico, the richest in the world, produced nothing; in others, those of Peru did not yield a tenth of their former amount. Upon the whole, from 1810 to 1830, the average annual supply of the precious metals for the use of the globe was not more than a third of what it had been in the preceding twenty years. This, too, occurred at a time when the re-establishment of peace had greatly augmented the commercial intercourse of men; when an increasing population and mutual traffic everywhere imperatively called for an enlarged circulating medium; and when the vast and universal progress of luxury was daily absorbing a larger quantity of the precious metals in plate and objects of private ornament.¹‡

¹ See Porter's Parl. Tables, v. 170.

Incalculable is the effect which this prodigious dimi-

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXVII.

† See Appendix, C, Chap. LXVII.

‡ See on this subject Appendix, D, Chap. LXVII., where three most interesting tables are given. They afford the real key to the subsequent political changes in the British empire.

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LXVII.

1826.

87.

Disastrous
influence of
this change
on Great
Britain.

nution in the supply of the precious metals has had on the fortunes of the British empire. England having been, during the time that it was going on, the great workshop of the globe, the centre of commercial intercourse, the spring of commercial activity, for the whole world, the effect of any material change in the value of the circulating medium was much more powerfully felt by its inhabitants than by those of any other country. Combined with the simultaneous and still more disastrous contraction of the currency by the English Act of 1819, which compelled the Bank of England to resume its payments in gold, it produced a greater and more ruinous effect on private fortunes in England than anything recorded in her annals. Thence, the constant decline of prices which was felt by the commercial classes as so sore an evil during this whole period, and the effects of which still continue with very little abatement. The feverish excitement of 1823 and 1824, originating in a great measure in the unbounded expectations of commercial prosperity which were generally entertained in this country from the final establishment of South American independence, only augmented the general distress, from the frightful catastrophe in which it terminated. All attempts to work the mines by British capital have failed, in consequence of the turbulence and insecurity of the country; and above a hundred and fifty millions of British money have been lost in those disastrous mining speculations, or in loans to the faithless insolvent republics of the New World.* All classes suffered by this diminution in the supply of the precious metals, and consequent fall in the money price of every article of consumption, except the fundholders and the capitalists, who have proportionably gained; and thence the general discontent which prevailed from 1815 to 1830.

* The amount lost by Britain in loans to North and South America and the revolutionary government of Spain, was stated by Lord Palmerston at this enormous amount, in parliament on 17th July 1847.

The incomes of the landholders for a quarter of a century were declining, and the weight of their debts was increasing; the farmers, from the fall in the price of their produce, were progressively impoverished: all who gained their livelihood by buying and selling—in other words, the whole mercantile classes—found their stock daily sinking in value. In making the transition from high to low prices, a whole generation suffered distress—great part of it was ruined. It was exactly the converse of the vast spring to industry which resulted from the rise of prices consequent on the first discovery of the South American mines. Thence the general dissatisfaction and desire for change which overturned the equilibrium of British society, swept away the bulwarks of British thought, and produced that general uneasiness and longing after change which terminated in the Reform Bill. Such was the fruit which England reaped from its insidious aid, in the face of solemn treaties, to dismember the Spanish empire, and force revolution upon a people unprepared for freedom. Mr Canning boasted in 1823 that he had called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old; but in so doing he wellnigh submerged his own country. The moral laws of nature are of universal application and unceasing activity—*Non alia Romæ, alia Athenis*.* France, as the natural consequence of, and just retribution for her iniquitous interference in the North American insurrection, received the revolution of 1789 and twenty years of bloodshed; England, as the natural consequence of, and righteous punishment for, her perfidious support of the South American revolt, received fifteen years of distress and the revolution of 1832.†

But these social and political changes at home are neither the only, nor the most material ones, which have

CHAP.
LXVII.

1826.

88.

Its influence
in produc-
ing the Re-
form Bill.

* "Not one thing at Rome, another at Athens."

† See ALISON'S "*England in 1815 and 1845*," where the author has endeavoured to explain this most important and interesting subject.

CHAP.
LXVII.

1826.
89.

Disastrous
effect of the
Revolution
in South
America on
the British
colonial
empire.

followed the English interference in the South American revolution. Consequences equally important, perhaps in their ultimate issues still more calamitous, have ensued from it to the British colonial empire in America. Mexico, surrendered to the weakening effect of its own passions, and the desolation of a premature and perilous freedom, has become the prey of a succession of tyrants, so bloodthirsty and licentious that private worth has fled from the direction of affairs ; and public prosperity and national strength have, for the time at least, disappeared from the realm. No counterpoise thus exists to the expansion of the United States in North America. They will expand over Mexico as they have done over Texas, and, between squatting, appropriation, and intimidation, swallow up the whole magnificent realm won for the Castilian crown by the sword of Cortez. England will look in vain for an ally in the New World, to aid her in combating the growing strength, and curbing the ambitious designs, of her aspiring offspring. British prudence and valour may avert the catastrophe for a time ; but it is evident that, without an ally there to aid us in the conflict, our noble North American colonies, nourishing now nearly a million tons of British shipping, with our once splendid West Indian islands, must be wrested from us by a nation already numbering twenty millions of souls within its bounds, and doubling every quarter of a century. England, from motives of gain, interfered, covertly and discredibly, to wrest from Spain her American colonies, and as a just retribution she will, from the consequences of her injustice, probably lose her own.

90.
Ultimate
prospects of
the Spanish
race in the
New World.

In despair at such results from a political movement in the effects of which they had contemplated an unbounded field for social regeneration and commercial speculation, the English people have ceased to take any interest in the South American republics ; they have transferred their desires rather to securing the Brazilian market, where,

amidst the miseries of the worst species of slavery, the security of property under a monarchical government has reared up an opening for their manufactures of greater extent than the whole Spanish republics put together, albeit with a population four-fold greater.* They had little sympathy for commonwealths who began their career by insolvency and dishonesty, with repudiation of the creditors who had supported them in their distress, and ingratitude to the heroes who had established their independence;† where dividends were not to be obtained on stocks, nor prices for cargoes; where bloodshed was universal, turmoil incessant, and mankind seemed to crouch only to a succession of tyrants. Intent only on gain, the English people no sooner found that the South American republics had ceased to afford a market for their produce, than they turned their turbulent activity in other directions, and engaged in fresh projects of foreign aggrandisement, and wild schemes of social change.

But amidst all this unbounded disaster, a great moral renovation has been going on in these wasted realms in the only school of real improvement—the school of suffering. The Spaniards have indelibly implanted their seed in their transatlantic colonies; the energy which was alone wanting to enable them to cultivate their wilds, has perhaps been acquired amidst the unspeakable suffering of the last thirty years. A great destiny awaits that once noble people, if they can cast off their corruptions. The revolution came too soon for the interests of the existing generation in Spanish America, and England has been justly punished for the part she took, from selfish motives, in bringing it about. But Providence can over-

91.
Ultimate
improvement of
Spanish
America in
the school
of suffering.

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXVII. where their comparative commerce is given.

† “Il est triste d’ajouter, que les braves corps d’Anglais qui contribuèrent beaucoup aux succès des campagnes de Bolivar ne furent récompensés que par de mauvais traitements, la misère, la maladie, et la mort.”—DUCONDRAY HOLSTEIN, *Vie de Bolivar*, ii. 113.

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1826.

rule even the sins of men to the ultimate welfare of humanity. And those who despair of the fortunes of the Spanish race in South America, because they have slaughtered each other with such cruelty, and their revolution has hitherto brought nothing but disaster, would do well to look back to the usages of war in England during the contest of the Roses, or the national freedom she enjoyed during the usurpation of Cromwell; and reflect on the issue to which Supreme Wisdom has in the end conducted bloodshed as universal, and military despotism as oppressive, as that which has hitherto blasted all the hopes of humanity in the New World.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

FIRST INVASION OF SPAIN BY WELLINGTON.

JAN.—NOV. 1812.

THE close of the year 1811 and commencement of 1812 witnessed the elevation of the power of Napoleon to its highest point ; and such was the magnitude of the forces then at his disposal, and the paralysis which had seized on the minds of men from the unbroken career of his success, that his empire appeared established on a foundation which could never be shaken. Every continental state had successively attempted to combat it, and every one had been overthrown in the struggle. The alliance of Russia and Austria in 1805, of Russia and Prussia in 1806, of Spain and Austria in 1809, had been alike unable to restrain the rapid and portentous growth of his power. From pacific repose he rose up, like a giant refreshed by sleep, more formidable in numbers and organisation than when the last strife terminated ; from warlike struggles he emerged conquering and to conquer. It was hard to say whether his power had risen more rapidly in peace or in war ; it was difficult to see what limit could be imposed to the growth of an empire to which the former brought only an increase of hostile preparations, the latter an enlargement of pacific resources.

The systematic exertions of military monarchies, and the tumultuous array of popular enthusiasm, had been alike overthrown in the strife. Little could be hoped

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

1.

Vast power
and re-
sources of
Napoleon
at this
period.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

2.

Successive
destruction
of all the
powers
arrayed
against
him.

from the former, when the heroism of Aspern had failed ; nothing expected from the latter, when the devotion of Saragossa had been subdued. The hopes awakened by the retreat from Torres Vedras had been chilled by subsequent disasters : the subjugation of the east of Spain seemed to presage the speedy concentration of an overwhelming force against the battalions of Wellington in the west ; and, if he succumbed, nothing remained, from the shores of the Vistula to the Pillars of Hercules, capable of combating the French power, or resisting the imperial will. A general despair, in consequence, seized upon the public mind over all Europe. Even the bravest hearts hesitated as to the ultimate issue of a contest in which former Continental efforts had terminated only in disaster ; and many ages of military servitude were regarded by the strongest heads as the inevitable destiny of Europe, to be overthrown, perhaps, at last only by a fresh deluge of northern barbarians.*

3.

Remarkable
prediction
of a British
clergyman
at this
period,
Feb. 28,
1811.

It was at this dark and mournful period, that a clergyman of the Church of England thus addressed a British congregation :—" There is a limit, my brethren, to human suffering ; there is an hour in oppression when resolution springs from despair. There are bounds in the moral as well as the material system to the dominion of evil ; there are limits to the injustice of nations as well as the guilt of individuals. There is a time when cunning ceases to delude and hypocrisy to deceive ; when power

* "Those cursed, double cursed news have sunk my spirits so much, that I am almost disbelieving a Providence. God forgive me ! But I think some evil demon has been permitted in the shape of this tyrannical monster, whom God has sent on the nations visited in his anger. The Spaniards may have Roman pride, but they want Roman talent to support it : and, in short, unless God in his mercy should raise up amongst them one of those extraordinary geniuses, who seem created for the emergencies of an oppressed people, I confess I see no hope. The spring-tide may, for aught I know, break upon us in the next session of parliament. There is an evil fate upon us in all we do at home or abroad."—SIR WALTER SCOTT to ELLIS, 13th December 1808, and September 14, 1809.—LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, ii. 225, 227, 253.

Dec. 24,
1806.

To the same purport, Sir James Mackintosh said, writing to Gentz at Vienna :—"I believe, like you, in a resurrection, because I believe in

ceases to overawe, and oppression will no longer be borne. To that hour, to that avenging hour, Time and Nature are approaching. The cup of bitterness is full, and there is a drop which will make it overflow. Unmarked as it may be amidst the blaze of military glory, the dread Hand is yet writing on the wall the sentence of its doom : the hour is steadily approaching when evil will be overcome with good, and when the life-blood of an injured world will collect at the heart, and by one convulsive effort throw off the load that has oppressed it. It is impossible that the oppressed can longer beckon the approach of a power which comes only to load them with heavier chains ; it is impossible that the nations of Europe, cradled in civilisation and baptised into the liberty of the children of God, can long continue to bend their free-born heads before the feet of foreign domination ; or that they can suffer the stream of knowledge which has so long animated their soil, to terminate at last in the deep stagnation of military despotism. Even the oppressor bleeds in the hour that he triumphs : his people are goaded to exertions which they loathe : his laurels are wet with the tears of those who have been bereaved of their children.

“For years our attention has been fixed on that great and guilty country which has been fertile in nothing but revolution ; and from which, amidst the clouds that cover it, we have seen that dark and shapeless form arise, which, like the vision that appalled the king of Babylon, ‘hath

4.
Clear prophecy of
Napoleon's
approaching
downfall.

the immortality of civilisation ; but when, by whom, and in what form, are questions which I have not the sagacity to answer, and on which it would be boldness to hazard a conjecture. A dark and stormy night, a black series of ages, may be prepared for our posterity before the dawn that opens the more perfect day. Who can tell how long that fearful night may be before the dawn of a brighter morrow ? The race of man may reach the promised land : but there is no assurance that the present generation will not perish in the wilderness. The mischief has become too intricate to be unravelled in our day. An evil greater than despotism, even in its worst and most hideous form, approaches—a monarchy literally universal seems about to be established.”—MACKINTOSH to GENTZ, 24th December 1806 ; and to WILLIAM OGILVIE, Esq., 24th February 1807 ; *Memoirs of Mackintosh*, i. 307 and 383.

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its legs of iron and its arms of brass.' Yet, while our eye strains to measure its dimensions, and our ear shrinks at the threatening of its voice, let us survey it with the searching eye of the prophet, and we shall see that its feet are of 'base and perishable clay.' Amidst all the terrors of its brightness, it has no foundation in the moral stability of justice. It is irradiated by no beam from Heaven ; it is blessed by no prayer of man ; it is worshipped with no gratitude by the patriot heart. It may remain for the time that is appointed it ; but the awful hour is on the wing when the universe will resound with its fall : and the same sun which now measures out with reluctance the length of its impious reign, will one day pour its undecaying beams amid its ruins, and bring forth from the earth which it has overshadowed the promises of a greater spring."*—That ultimate triumph of virtue over oppression which the foresight of the statesman could not venture to anticipate, and the courage of the soldier hardly dared to expect, was clearly foreseen, and confidently announced, at the darkest period of the struggle, by the undoubting voice of religious faith. The philosopher may admire the moral grandeur of the sentiments conveyed in these eloquent words ; the historian may mark the exact accomplishment which the prediction they contained was so soon to receive, and its singular felicity at the moment it was uttered : but the author trusts he will be forgiven if he feels a yet deeper interest in the voice of a revered parent—now issuing from the tomb—and gives vent to an expression of thankfulness, that he has been permitted to follow out, in the narrative of this mighty convulsion, those principles in the moral government of the world which were invariably maintained and publicly expressed by his father during the whole of its continuance.

The subsequent chapters of this history contain nothing

* Fast Sermon, February 28, 1811, and Feb. 1806, by the Rev. ARCHIBALD ALISON, Prebendary of Sarum, &c.—*Sermons*, vol. i. 272 and 408 ; 5th edition.

but the accomplishment of this prediction. The world did indeed resound with the fall of the awful form which had overshadowed it; and the English historian may well feel a pride at the part which his country took in this immortal deliverance. The British army was the vanguard which broke the spell which had so long entranced mankind: it was from the rocks of Torres Vedras that the French arms first permanently receded; it was on the plains of Castile that the first mortal strokes to their empire were delivered. Before the Niemen had been crossed, the rivulet of the Albuera had run red with Gallic blood; before Smolensko had fallen, Badajoz had yielded to the resistless assault of the English soldiery; it was in the triumphs of Salamanca that the Russians sought the long-wished-for omen of ultimate victory; in the recovery of Madrid that they beheld, amidst the flames of Moscow, the presage of their own deliverance.*

The first to open the career of freedom to the world, England was also the last to recede from the conflict: the same standards which had waved over its earliest triumphs, were seen above the reserve on whom the final throes of the struggle depended. Vain would have been the snows of Russia and the conquest of Leipsic, vain the passage of the Rhine and the capture of Paris, if British valour had not for ever arrested the renewed career of victory on the field of Waterloo.† And mark the extraordinary coincidence between the termination of revolutionary triumph and the commencement of righteous retribution. Both occurred at the same moment: it would seem as if a distinct line had been drawn by Omnipotence.

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5.Commence-
ment at this
period of the
fall of the
French em-
pire.6.
Exactly
when it had
attained its
highest ele-
vation.

* The news of the battle of Salamanca was received by both the French and Russian armies the evening before the battle of Borodino; that of the taking of Madrid by Lord Wellington as Kutusoff was performing his circular march round Moscow, by the light of the burning capital.

† "If the English army," said Napoleon, "had been defeated at Waterloo, what would have availed all the Russians, Austrians, or Prussians, who were crowding to the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees?"—NAPOLEON, *Memoirs*, ix. book 203.

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tence, beyond which victory should not fan the banners of guilt on the one side, nor disaster sink the spirit of virtue on the other.

"Fond, impious man ! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, hath quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray."

On the 8th January 1812, the long series of revolutionary triumphs terminated with the fall of Valencia ; and the NEXT DAY Wellington led his army across the Agueda, and commenced the career of victory which never paused till the oppressor was hurled from his throne, and the British standards waved in triumph on the walls of Paris.*

7.
Wellington
prepares to
besiege
Ciudad
Rodrigo.
Jan. 1812.

Wellington no sooner perceived, from the dispersion of the armies of Portugal and the north, in wide cantonments on the upper Tagus and the Douro, in December 1811, that Ciudad Rodrigo was abandoned to its own resources, than he judged that the favourable opportunity, so long watched for, of attacking that fortress with some chance of success, had arrived. His army, indeed, was still unhealthy. Nearly twenty thousand were yet in hospital ; for though large reinforcements had arrived from England, yet the fresh regiments, in great part affected by the Walcheren fever, were far more liable to sickness than the old soldiers. The pay was three months in arrear ; supplies were still got up with difficulty ; and the new clothing for the troops had not yet arrived. But in all these respects, he was well aware, the enemy's armies were in a still worse condition ; while the new positions assigned to, and now taken by them, in conformity with the orders of the French Emperor issued in November,* had removed them to such a distance as rendered it doubtful whether, especially at that inclement season, any adequate force could be assembled for the

* This is strictly true : every subsequent march in advance in Russia was a step towards ruin.

relief of the fortress. Bonnet was in the Asturias; Montbrun at Alicante; and the bulk of the army of the north, now charged with the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo, in cantonments on the Douro. The better, however, to conceal his real designs, Wellington, in the close of 1811, caused Hill to assume the offensive in Estremadura; and this was done with such success by that enterprising officer, whose slightest movements were watched with the utmost anxiety since the blow of Aroyo de Molinos, that the enemy abandoned Almendralejo and Merida, and concentrated their forces towards Llerena; while the English advanced posts occupied the former town on the 2d of January, and spread themselves out in the neighbourhood of Badajoz. Such was the impression produced by this irruption into the French quarters, that Soult, conceiving Badajoz to be threatened, gave orders for assembling his forces throughout the whole of Andalusia, at the very moment that Wellington, having concealed his designs till the instant of their execution, was making his troops prepare fascines and gabions in their respective villages, and laying down the portable bridge over the Agueda for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.¹

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Dec. 29,
1811.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xx.
281, 282.
Jones, ii.
60, 61.
Belm. i.
215. Nap.
iv. 369, 371.

All things being in readiness, the bridge was fixed on the 6th, but a heavy fall of snow prevented the troops from moving till the 8th; as if to make the termination of Napoleon's long career of conquest, by the surrender of Valencia, coincide exactly with the commencement of his fall, by the English attack on CIUDAD RODRIGO. The light division only crossed on that day, and immediately formed the investment of the fortress; in the evening an advanced redoubt, situated on the Great Teson, was carried by assault: the first parallel was established on the day following; and a few days after, the convent of Santa Cruz was stormed. The garrison, alarmed at the progress of the besiegers, now made a vigorous sortie, and did considerable mischief to the head of the sap before they were repulsed; but the progress of the works was

8.
Commence-
ment of the
operations.
Jan. 9.

Atlas,
Plate 68.

Jan. 13.

Jan. 14.

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not seriously interrupted by this effort. On the same afternoon the batteries opened ; and at night the fortified convent of San Francisco, which flanked the right of the trenches, was carried by a gallant escalade of the 40th regiment. At half-past four in the evening, just as darkness set in, the breaching batteries opened, and thirty heavy guns sent forth their crashing fire against the walls. "Then was beheld a spectacle at once fearful and sublime. The enemy replied to the assailants' fire with more than fifty pieces : the bellowing of eighty large guns shook the ground far and wide ; the smoke rested in heavy volumes upon the battlements of the place, or curled in light wreaths about the numerous spires ; the shells, hissing through the air, seemed fiery serpents leaping from the darkness ; the walls crashed to the stroke of the bullet, and the distant mountains, returning the sound, appeared to moan over the falling city.^{1*}

¹ Nap. iv.
375, 381.
Jones, ii.
60, 62.
Gurw. viii.
525, 527.
Belm. iv.
265, 271.

9.
Rapid progress of the
siege.

On the three following days the fire continued with great vigour on both sides : the wall came down in huge masses, and though the besiegers were exposed to a most destructive cannonade, and the head of the trenches was wellnigh stifled by the storm of grape and shells, eleven thousand of which were discharged by the enemy, yet the progress of the ruin was very evident. By reserving all their fire for the ramparts, and not discharging a shot at the other defences, the *faussebraye* was beaten down, and two large breaches were declared practicable in the rampart on the morning of the 19th. The nearest batteries were still above two hundred yards distant, and not one of the parapets was injured—circumstances which augmented greatly the difficulties of carrying the place by storm. But Wellington was for many reasons eager for the assault ; for the prize to be gained by its capture was

* NAPIER. Colonel Napier's descriptions of battles and sieges are, in some places, the finest passages that exist in that style in modern literature. Lord Londonderry's description of the same event is also uncommonly graphic and impressive.—LONDONDERRY, ii. 25.

immense, and every day added to the danger of the fortress being relieved from without. The whole siege equipage and stores of the army of Portugal were deposited in the place, and the French had no others nearer than Madrid; its capture would render any attack on Almeida or the lines of Torres Vedras impossible for a very long period; the enemy's credit would suffer by the capture of so important a stronghold under the eye of two armies, each as strong as that of the besiegers, and the British would acquire by its reduction both a frontier fortress of approved strength, and a basis for future offensive operations of inestimable importance. Marmont, too, was collecting his troops and approaching: it was expected that by the 28th or 29th he would be at Salamanca, only four marches distant, with forty thousand men; and the recent failure at Badajoz told but too clearly what might be the result of prosecuting the siege according to the established rules, and waiting till the counter-scarp was blown in, and the parapets commanding the breach were all levelled by the besiegers' fire. The place was accordingly summoned on the 18th; and the governor having returned a gallant answer that he would not surrender, preparations were made for the assault.¹

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¹ Gur. viii.
526, 527.
Nap. iv.
379, 383.
Jones, ii.
61, 62.
Belm. iv.
271, 277.

The perilous honour of this attack fell on the light and third divisions, the former under Craufurd, the latter led by Picton, whose turn it was to be that day on duty in the trenches. The latter, commanded by General M'Kinnon, preceded by its light companies, under Major Manners, was to attack the main breach; the Portuguese of the division were in reserve in the trenches, ready to advance if occasion required. The former, under General Vandeleur and Colonel Barnard, received orders to assault the lesser breach, and, as soon as they got footing on the summit, turn sharp to the right, in order to take in flank the defenders of the main breach, and assail in rear the interior retrenchments by which the enemy hoped to stop the progress of the assailants, even if they did win

10.
Plan of the
assault.

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the rampart. This done, and a communication between the two columns being effected, an effort was to be made to burst open the Salamanca gate, and let in the rest of the division. Pack, with his brigade of Portuguese, as soon as the firing became general, was to make a false attack by escalade on the outwork of St Jago, on the opposite side of the town, which might be converted into a real one if a favourable opportunity of penetrating should occur. The 5th regiment, forming part of the third division, was to enter the ditch at its extreme right by breaking down the palisades, thence escalade the fausse-braye, and proceed along the foot of the rampart to the great breach; while the 94th was to leap direct into the fosse, also to the right of the main storming party of the third division, and to join the 5th in their advance to the great breach. The storming parties received orders not to fire a shot, but push on with the bayonet; the bearers of the bags, ladders, and other engines of assault, were not even armed, lest any irregular skirmish should interfere with their smoothing the way for the other troops. The preparations of the besieged, however, were very formidable: bombs and hand-grenades lined the top of the breaches to roll down on the assailants; bags of powder were disposed among the ruins, to explode when they began to ascend the slopes; two heavy guns charged with grape, flanked the summit of the larger breach; and a mine was prepared under it, to explode if all other defences failed. These obstacles, however, noways daunted the British troops; and the last words of Wellington's instructions breathed the spirit of the whole army as well as his own—"Ciudad Rodrigo must be carried by assault this evening at seven o'clock."¹

¹ Jones's
Sieges, i.
137, 140.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
Jan. 20,
1812. Gur.
viii. 527.
Lond. ii.
259, 264.
Nap. iv.
382, 384.
Belm. iv.
274, 276.

11.
Aspect of
both sides
before the
assault.

The evening was calm and tranquil: the moon, in her first quarter, diffused a doubtful light over the scene, which, without disclosing particular objects, rendered their rude outline distinctly visible. The projecting bastions stood forth like giants in the gloom, darkly yet

clearly defined on the adjoining shadows ; while in their sides, yawning gulfs, half filled up with ruins, showed where the breaches had been made and the deadly strife was to ensue. In the British lines the trenches were crowded with armed men, among whom not a whisper was to be heard, nor a movement perceived ; so completely had discipline, and the absorbing anxiety of the moment, subdued every unruly feeling and stilled every dauntless heart. As the great clock, however, of the cathedral tolled seven, the word was quietly passed along that all was ready ; and, leaping at once out of the trenches, the men rushed forward to the breaches, led by their respective forlorn-hopes : that of the third division headed by Ensign Mackie, and General M'Kinnon leading the storming party ; that of the light by Mr Gurwood,* followed by Colonel Colborne of the 52d, and Major Napier at the head of the storming party ;—and with the exploits of these brave men began THE FALL OF THE FRENCH EMPIRE.¹

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¹ Jones, i.
140. Lond.
ii. 263, 264.
Nap. iv.
382, 384.
Belm. iv.
177, 178.
Gurw. viii.
527, 528.

M'Kinnon's division crossed the open space between the trenches and the rampart, under a tempest of grape and musketry from the walls, and in a few minutes reached the counterscarp, which was found to be eleven feet deep. The sappers, however, instantly threw down their bags of hay, which soon diminished the depth by one-half ; and the men, hastily leaping down, arrived at the foot of the great breach. But there a most serious opposition awaited them. The shells, rolled down from the top, burst amidst the throng with frightful explosions. Every shot of the close ranks of the French infantry told with effect on the dense mass below ; and when, forcing their way up the slope, the British soldiers at length reached the summit, they were torn in pieces by a terrific discharge of grape from the heavy guns within a few yards' distance on either side, which at once, like a

12.
The third
division
carry the
great
breach.

* The late Lieutenant-Colonel Gurwood, the worthy companion in arms of Wellington, who conducted the publication of his *Despatches*.

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scythe, swept the whole warlike multitude down. Before these could be reloaded, however, the men immediately behind pushed up ; the 94th, who had just come up from the right, headed by Colonel Campbell, leading the way, and won the ascent of the *faussebraye*. Meanwhile, the 5th had also arrived at the foot of the same defence by the ditch, and, mounting it by escalade, arrived at the bottom of the great breach at the same time with the 94th. A pause for a few seconds here ensued, as the storming party, which should have preceded these regiments, had not arrived ; but a sergeant of the 5th having climbed up the rugged ledge of the wall to the right of the great breach, called out that all was clear ; and both regiments, headed by their respective commanders, made a simultaneous rush up the breach, which was at once won. But just as, in the tumult of victory, they were striving to penetrate the interior retrenchments which the besieged had constructed to bar their further entrance, the mine which had been worked under their feet was suddenly exploded, and the bravest and most forward, among whom was the gallant M'Kinnon, were blown into the air. Still the column which had won the great breach held the ground they had gained, though they found it impossible to penetrate farther into the town from the obstacle of the inner retrenchments. Two deep ditches had been cut in the rampart to the right, the first of which was passed by the grenadiers of the 5th and 94th, but the second rampart proved an insurmountable obstacle : though Canch of the 5th leaped across the ditch, followed by the grenadiers of both corps, all that passed were either killed or wounded. They therefore established themselves among the ruins to await the result of the other attacks, and soon the scarlet uniforms came pouring in on every side.¹

¹ Lond. ii.
264, 265.
Nap. iv.
383, 385.
Gurw. viii.
527, 528.
Belm. iv.
277, 278.
United
Serv. Jour.
Aug. 1833,
543; and
Jones's
Sieges, i.
141, 143.

In the meanwhile the light division under Craufurd, and the Portuguese under Pack, were still more successful.

The former had three hundred yards of glacis to cross before they reached its crest; but this distance was swiftly passed, though the gallant Craufurd received a fatal wound during the rush; the counterscarp, eleven feet deep, was leaped down in the face of a dreadful fire of grape and musketry; and the lesser breach reached. It proved, however, to be extremely steep and contracted; and when two-thirds of the ascent had been won, the struggle was so violent at the narrowest part, that the men paused, and every musket in the crowd was snapped under the instinct of self-defence, though not one was loaded. Colonel Colborne,* however, at the head of his gallant regiment, the 52d, continued to press on; and, though wounded in the shoulder by a musket-ball, still led his men. His major, Napier, who was at this moment struck down by a grape-shot, called to the troops to trust to their bayonets. The officers all at once sprang to the front, and the summit was won. Then arose a loud shout from every quarter; for Pack's Portuguese at the same moment had escalated the walls on the opposite side. The light division now pushed on in great numbers, and, not forgetting their orders, turned sharp to the right, and with loud cheers assaulted in flank the retrenchment at the great breach, where the third division had been arrested; and by a mighty effort of both united, the barriers were burst through, and the troops rushed in. Some irregular fighting occurred in the streets, but no farther systematic resistance was attempted; and Mr Gurwood, who, though wounded, had maintained his post at the head of the third division when they carried the breach, received the governor's sword, the deserved reward of his heroism, at the gate of the castle.^{1†}

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13.

Storm of
the lesser
breach.

¹ Baird's
Report,
Aug. 8,
1812. Belm.
iv. 291.
Lond. ii.
264, 265.
Nap. iv.
383, 384.
Gurw. viii.
527, 528.
Belm. iv.
278, 279.

* Afterwards the officer who headed the decisive charge of the 52d at Waterloo, now Lord Seaton, whose important services in Canada have so deservedly raised him to the British peerage.

† For the particulars of the delivery of the governor's sword to Colonel Gurwood, see the original letters of Gurwood and Colonel Husson, the French commander of artillery, in the *United Service Journal*, May 1843.

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14.

Disorders
consequent
on the
storm.

A frightful scene of plunder, intoxication, and violence immediately ensued. The firing, which ceased for a moment when the tumult at the breaches subsided, was now renewed in the irregular way which denoted the commencement of riot and disorder; and shouts and screams on all sides were fearfully intermingled with the groans of the wounded. The churches were ransacked, the wine and spirit cellars pillaged, and brutal intoxication spread in every direction. Soon the flames were seen bursting forth in several quarters; some houses were burned to the ground, others already ignited; and it was only by the intrepidity of a few officers and soldiers, whose coolness deserves the highest praise, that a fire, wantonly lighted in the midst of the great powder magazine, was extinguished. By degrees, however, the drunken men dropped down from excess of liquor, or fell asleep; the efforts of the officers and fresh divisions which Wellington instantly ordered into the town, were incessant to restore order; the houses on fire, and not consumed, were happily saved; and before morning a degree of order was restored which could hardly have been hoped for by those who witnessed the first license consequent upon victory. Yet even in these moments of unbridled passion, when the national vice of drunkenness appeared in its most frightful colours, some redeeming qualities were displayed. Though all who combated were put to death without mercy, yet the unresisting everywhere received quarter; no slaughter, either of the citizens or enemy took place; and of a garrison consisting only of eighteen hundred men at the commencement of the siege, full fifteen hundred, still unwounded, were made prisoners.¹

¹ Nap. iv.
386. Lond.
ii. 256, 267.
Belm. iv.
279.

15.
Vast im-
portance of
this capture.

The storming of Ciudad Rodrigo was one of the most brilliant exploits of the British army, and from none have greater or more splendid results immediately flowed. A hundred and fifty guns, including the whole battering train of Marmont's army, and immense stores of every

kind, fell into the hands of the allies, who had to lament the loss of thirteen hundred men, including two heroes cut off early in their career, Generals Craufurd and M'Kinnon. But it was not the material results, great and important as they were, which constituted its principal value. The moral influence with which it was attended was far more important. Wellington had now carried the frontier fortress of Spain, in the face of sixty thousand men hastening from the army of Portugal and the north to raise the siege. In the depth of winter he had thrown a portable bridge over the Agueda, and collected his troops and battering train with such secrecy and celerity, that the breaching batteries had opened their fire before the enemy had advices of the commencement of the enterprise, and the place was carried before they had begun to march for its relief. It was now evident that he had, for the first time since the Peninsular war commenced, obtained the ascendancy over his enemies; and that, with the initiative in operation, the war was to be carried into the territory occupied by the enemy. Nor was the proof afforded of the increased proficiency of the English in the art of war, and their improved skill in the multifarious duties connected with its successful prosecution, less gratifying or less prophetic of a revolution in the contest. Ciudad Rodrigo had been taken by storm after a siege of twelve days, in the depth of winter, by an army of forty thousand men; whereas Massena, with one of eighty thousand, had been detained before its walls six weeks in the height of summer. The intelligence of this unlooked-for success, therefore, excited the most enthusiastic joy in all the allied capitals. The democrats of Cadiz, already in secret correspondence with the French, were for the time overawed; and the English general was created Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo amidst the unanimous acclamations of the Cortes and people.¹ The Portuguese government forgot its jealousy of English interference, and conferred

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¹ Nap. iv.
386, 390.
Jones, ii.
64, 67.
Gurw. viii.
542.

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16.
Agitation
it produced
among the
French
generals.

upon him the title of Marquis of Torres Vedras ; while the thanks of the British parliament were voted to the army ; and a pension of £2000 a-year was settled on the earldom of Wellington.

Great was the consternation produced among the French generals by the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo. Marmont had arrived with the divisions under his immediate orders at Valladolid, to take the command of the newly organised army of Portugal, on the 13th January, without any suspicion of what was going forward ; and it was not till late in the evening of that day that he learned that the British had crossed the Agueda. Instantly orders were despatched to the troops in all directions to assemble. Bonnet was to hasten from the Asturian mountains ; Brennier from the valley of the Tagus ; Dorsenne to call in all the detached parties which were on the banks of the Douro ; and these troops were all to rendezvous at Salamanca on the 1st February. Meanwhile, however, not only was Ciudad Rodrigo taken, but the breaches in the walls were repaired, and provisions for six weeks thrown in ; and the British general, leaving a division to secure the place, had resumed his ancient position at Fuente Guinaldo. It is impossible now to doubt that this rapid and brilliant success was mainly owing to the ill-judged dispositions of the French Emperor, who had detached Montbrun to Valencia, dislocated his armies, and given almost all their divisions a new direction, at the very time when the decisive operation was undertaken. To this also must be joined the oppressive way in which he had always carried on war, which had so desolated the country as to render the dispersion of the troops to a prodigious distance indispensable in order to their subsistence. But it was never his custom to take blame to himself, where he could, by possibility, throw it upon others ; and his ill-humour at this disaster exhaled in violent invectives against both Marmont and Dorsenne,¹ though it was his own

¹ Belm. iv.
216, 217.
Berthier to
Marmont,
Feb. 11,
1812. Ber-
thier to
Marmont,
Feb. 18,
1812. Belm.
i. App. No.
88, 91.

directions which had left to neither the means of averting it.*

No sooner had Wellington put Ciudad Rodrigo in a situation of defence against any sudden attack, than he turned his eyes towards BADAJOZ, the remaining frontier fortress, which it was necessary that he should reduce before attempting his meditated invasion of the interior of Spain. As this enterprise required the united strength of the whole army, Ciudad Rodrigo, after having been repaired and provisioned for six weeks, was delivered over to Don Julian Sanchez, with his division of guerillas; and the Spanish government was warned in the strongest manner of the necessity of taking immediate steps to have the breaches thoroughly repaired, and provisions for at least six months thrown into it. Meanwhile preparations were made for the siege with all imaginable activity; but as the French marshals were now thoroughly alarmed by the blow struck at Ciudad Rodrigo, and Soult, in particular, was sensitively alive to any demonstrations against Badajoz, they required to be conducted with the utmost possible secrecy. The battering-train and engineers were accordingly embarked at Lisbon as if for Oporto; and at sea they were re-shipped on board small craft, privately sent out from different parts of the coast, to elude attention, and sent up the river Caldao, in the Alentejo, to

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17.

Secret pre-
parations
made
against
Badajoz.

* "The Emperor is highly displeased at the negligence you have evinced in the affair of Ciudad Rodrigo. Why had you not advices from it twice a-week? What were you doing with the five divisions of Souham? This is a strange mode of carrying on war; and the Emperor makes no secret of his opinion, that the disgrace of this disaster attaches to you. It would have fallen on General Thiébault, if that general had not been able to show that he had not sufficient force to do anything: whereas the whole division Souham was at your disposal. This humiliating check can only be ascribed to your defective dispositions, and the want of consideration in the measures you have adopted." —BERTHIER to DORSENE, 11th Feb. 1812; BELMAS, I., App. No. 88.

"The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo is an affront to you: and the English are sufficiently acquainted with French honour to know that that affront may become the source of a burden to them, by forcing them to preserve the prize they have won. The Emperor is far from being satisfied with your dispositions. You have the superiority over the enemy; and instead of taking the initiative, you are always on the defensive. You fatigue and harass your troops without doing anything: that is not the way to carry on war. Never mind Hill and

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Alcacer do Sal, where the country carriages could, without suspicion, convey them to the banks of the Guadiana ; while fascines and gabions were secretly prepared at Elvas, amidst other repairs of its ramparts, ostensibly directed to the defence of that fortress. Arrangements were at the same time made for transferring the grand supply of the army from the artery of the Douro to that of the Tagus : a temporary depot was formed at Celorica, as if for the nourishing of preparations on the Beira frontier, and a grand magazine established beyond the Douro. So completely did these preparations impose upon the French Emperor, that he entirely mistook the real point of attack ; and, in spite of the most urgent remonstrances of Marmont, who insisted that Badajoz was threatened, Napoleon wrote to him, "that the English general was not mad ; and that an invasion on the side of Salamanca was alone to be guarded against."¹*

¹ Jones, ii.
67, 68. Nap.
iv. 392, 393.
Belm. iv.
217, 218.

18.
Movement
of the army
to that
fortress.

Having thus completely outwitted the vigilance of the French Emperor, and at length completed his well-concealed preparations for the important enterprise in view, Wellington, on the 9th of March, suddenly commenced his march to the south ; and the troops from all quarters converged towards Badajoz. Victor Alten's German cavalry alone remained on the Agueda, to succour Ciudad Rodrigo if necessary, and retard any incursion which the

the army of the south : that army is strong enough to combat five divisions of the English army. You should have marched on Ciudad Rodrigo, and retaken it before the breaches were filled up or the place provisioned."—BERTHIER to MARMONT, 18th Feb. 1812 ; *Ibid. App.* No. 91.

* "You must suppose the English mad to imagine that they will march upon Badajoz, leaving you at Salamanca ; that is, leaving you in a situation to get to Lisbon before them. Even if, yielding to imprudent counsels, they should move towards the south, you may at once arrest their movements by detaching one or two divisions towards the Tagus : by that you will cause yourself to be respected, and regain the initiative over the enemy. I repeat it, then : the instructions of the Emperor are precise : you are not to quit Salamanca : you are even to reoccupy the Asturias : let your headquarters be at Salamanca ; and never cease to menace the English from thence."—BERTHIER to MARMONT, 11th February 1812.—These instructions were repeated in still stronger terms, in spite of Marmont's representations to the contrary, in another despatch of Berthier to him of 18th February 1811.—See BELMAS, i. No. 90, 91, *Appendix*.

enemy might attempt on the Beira frontier, which was put in as good a posture of defence as circumstances would admit. The English general arrived at Elvas on the 11th, and immediately prepared to invest Badajoz ; but incredible difficulties, which wellnigh proved fatal to the whole enterprise, retarded for a very considerable period the commencement of the siege. No representations which either Wellington, or his able coadjutor Mr Stuart, the English ambassador at Lisbon, could make, could induce the Portuguese regency to put in hazard their popularity, by making the magistrates draw forth the resources of the country for the conveyance of the ordnance and siege equipage, either from Almeida, whence some of it came, or from the river Caldao, whither the remainder had been brought by water-carriage. Hence, though the troops crossed the Tagus on a bridge of boats at Villa Velha on the 9th and 10th, it was not till the 15th that the pontoons could be thrown over the Guadiana, nor till the 17th that the investment of the fortress could be completed. The delay of these days afterwards required to be redeemed by torrents of British blood.¹*

To cover the siege, Hill was posted near Almendralejo with thirty thousand men, of whom five thousand were horse ; while Wellington himself, with twenty-two thousand, commanded the besieging force. It was at first expected that Marmont would immediately co-operate with Soult in endeavouring to disturb the operations of the English army ; but it was soon ascertained that his divisions had all marched through the Puerto de Pico, from the valley of the Tagus, into Castile, in obedience, as it is now known, to the absurd and positive orders of Napoleon ; and consequently the British covering army

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March 11.

March 15.

March 17.

¹ Nap. iv.

397, 398.

Jones, ii.

68, 69.

Vict. et

Conq. xxi.

24, 25.

19.

Disposition
of the troops
for the
siege.

* The rich city of Evora, which had suffered so dreadfully from Loison's massacre in August 1808, (*ante*, Chap. LIV. § 54,) and, from the effects of British aid, had never seen the fire of an enemy's bivouac since that time, refused to furnish a single cart.—NAPIER, iv. 397 ; WELLINGTON to STUART, 9th April 1812.—GURWOOD, ix. 52 ; WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL, 27th March 1812.—GURWOOD, ix. 19.

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¹ Jones, ii.
68, 69.
Belm. iv.
311, 314.
Nap. iv.
397, 398.

was relieved of all anxiety except that arising from Soult, who was approaching from Andalusia. Meanwhile the operations of the besiegers were vigorously conducted; but it was soon apparent that a most desperate as well as skilful defence might be anticipated. Philippon, whose great talents in this species of warfare had been experienced in the former siege, had been indefatigable during the six months that had since elapsed, in improving the fortifications, and adding to the strength and resources of the place.¹

20.
Defensive
measures
adopted by
Philippon.

Atlas,
Plate 69.

He had five thousand men under his command, drawn by equal proportions from the armies of Marmont, Soult, and Jourdan at Madrid, in order to interest all these commanders in its defence; the old breaches were repaired, and strong additional works constructed to retard the operations of the besiegers in the quarters from whence the former attacks had been made. The ditches had been cleared out, and in some places materially deepened, as well as filled with water; the glacis was everywhere elevated, so as to form the scarp of the rampart; the *tête-de-pont* on the other side of the river, ruined in the former siege, had been thoroughly repaired, and ample provisions laid in for the numerous garrison. The castle, in particular, which is situated on a rock more than a hundred feet above the level of the Guadiana, and surrounded by walls twenty-eight feet in height, was deemed perfectly secure; and what between dread of the approaching siege, and the orders of the French governor, all the inhabitants, except four or five thousand of the most indigent class, had left the place, so that no failure of provisions was to be apprehended.²

² Belm. iv.
311, 319.
Jones, ii.
68, 69. Nap.
iv. 397, 401.

21.
Commence-
ment of the
siege.
March 17.

These defensive preparations had rendered a renewal of the attack on Fort Christoval impossible; and therefore Wellington resolved to commence his operations against an outwork called Fort Picurina, with a view to the final attack on the rampart at the bastion of Trinidad, which could be breached from the hill on which it stood.

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Ground was broken against this outwork, unperceived by the enemy, in the night, and parallels established within two hundred yards of its walls. Alarmed at the progress of this approach, Philippon, two days after, ordered a sortie with fifteen hundred men, including some squadrons of cavalry, by the Trinidad gate. These gallant men, whose approach was covered by a thick fog, at first did great mischief in the British trenches, driving the whole working parties from their posts, sweeping away several hundred intrenching tools, and spreading confusion as far even as the bivouacs and depots in the rear. But Picton's whole division immediately ran to arms, and the enemy were ultimately driven back with the loss of above three hundred men; though the British purchased their final advantage by the loss of a hundred and fifty men killed and wounded, including Colonel Fletcher, the able chief of the engineers. To guard against similar checks in future, Wellington removed his reserve parks nearly half-a-mile farther back, and established a reserve guard of six field-pieces near the trenches, with a signal-post on a neighbouring height to give timely warning of the enemy's approach. No further attempt was made by the besieged to disturb the approaches of the British; but they had for some days a powerful ally in the rain, which descended in such floods that the trenches were filled with water, and the earth was so saturated that it was impossible to cut it into any regular form. At length on the 24th, after a deluge of four days, the atmosphere cleared up; and the investment was completed on the right bank of the Guadiana, while a heavy fire was opened from eight-and-twenty guns on the Picurina, which soon beat down the outer palisades, the British marksmen keeping up such a fire from the trenches that no man ventured to look over the parapet. The defences were injured, though not breached; but as they did not exhibit the appearance of great external strength, and time was of essential value, from the known energy of Soult,¹ who was collecting his forces to raise the

March 19.

March 24.

March 25.
¹ Belm. iv.
319, 329.
Nap. iv.
406, 408.
Jones, ii.
70, 71.
Gurw. ix.
6, 17. Jones's
Sieges, i.
175, 186.

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22.

Storming of
Fort Picu-
rina.

siege, it was determined, without farther delay, to endeavour to carry the fort by assault.

The attack was made by General Kempt with five hundred of the third division. The night was fine, and the arrangements skilfully and correctly made : but when the troops, by a sudden rush, reached the palisades, they found them so far repaired as to render entrance impossible ; while a streaming fire from the top of the walls cut down all who paused at that post of danger. The crisis soon became imminent, and the carnage terrible, for the enemy's marksmen shot fast from the rampart ; the alarm-bells in the town rang violently, and the guns of the castle opened in rear on the struggling mass of the assailants. Amidst this fearful tumult the cool courage of Kempt skilfully directed the attack : the troops were drawn round to the part of the fort sheltered from the fire ; the reserves were quickly brought up, and sent headlong in to support the front. The shock was irresistible ; in an instant the scaling-ladders were applied, and the assailants with loud cheers mounted the rampart ; while at the same time the axe-men of the light division discovered the gate in the gorge, and, hewing down the barriers, also burst in on the side next the place. So sudden was the onset, so vehement the fight, that the garrison, in the confusion, forgot, or had not time, to roll over the shells and combustibles arranged on the ramparts. The British lost above three hundred and fifty men in this desperate assault, which lasted an hour ; but it contributed essentially to the progress of the siege ; for Philippon had calculated upon retarding the besiegers four or five days longer by this outwork, and, if the assault had not taken place on that day, this would actually have happened, as the loopholed gallery in the counterscarp and the mines would by that time have been completed.¹

¹ Belm. i. 329, 331.
Nap. iv. 409, 410.
Jones, ii. 70, 71; and
Sieges, i. 189, 191.
Gurw. ix. 18, 19.

No sooner did Philippon learn the capture of the fort, than he opened a tremendous fire upon it from every gun

on the bastions which could be brought to bear, and with such effect that the lodgment effected in it was destroyed. As the troops could not remain in the work, a sally to retake it with three battalions was attempted, but was quickly repulsed. On the following night, however, the men were got under cover, and the second parallel being completed in advance of the fort, enfilading and breaching batteries were erected in it; and after five days' continued firing, the sap being pushed up close to the walls, the Trinidad bastion crumbled under the repeated strokes of the bullet, and soon three large yawning chasms appeared in its walls. By the morning of the 6th they were all declared practicable; and though the counter-scarp was still entire, and the most formidable preparations were evidently making to retrench the summits of the ruined parts of the rampart, yet, as Soult was now approaching from Andalusia, and Marmont had concentrated his whole force at Salamanca, from whence he was expected to menace Ciudad Rodrigo, into which the Spaniards had never yet, notwithstanding the urgent representations of Wellington, thrown any provisions, the British general determined to hazard an assault on the following day.¹

The plan of attack was suited to the magnitude of the enterprise, the extent of the preparations for repelling it which had been made by the garrison, and the known courage and ability both of the governor and his followers. On the right, Picton's division was to file out of the trenches, to cross the Rivillas rivulet, and endeavour to scale the castle walls, notwithstanding their rocky elevation and imposing height, as soon as the tumult at the breaches had drawn the principal attention of the enemy to the other side of the fortress. On the left, Leith's division was to make a feint on the near Pardaleras outwork, and a real attack, by escalade, on the more distant San Vincente bastion, though the glacis was there mined, the ditch deep, the scarp twenty-eight feet high, and the

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23.

Preparations for an assault of the fortress. March 26.

¹ Wellington to Lord Liverpool. March 27, 1812. Gur. ix. 16, 20. Nap. iv. 412, 415. Belm. iv. 333, 349. Jones, ii. 71, and Gurw. ix. 31.

24.

Plan of attack of the fortress itself.

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¹ Wellington's instructions, April 6, 1812. Gur. ix. 36, 38. Nap. iv. 417, 419. Jones, ii. 71, 72; and Sieges, i. 212, 217. Belm. iv. 348, 349.

ramparts lined with bold and determined men. In the centre, the fourth and light divisions, under General Colville and Colonel Barnard, were to assault the breaches. Like the other columns of assault, they were furnished with ladders and axes, and preceded by storming parties of five hundred men, led by their respective forlorn-hopes. The light division was to assail the bastion of Santa Maria, the fourth that of Trinidad; and the two together were nearly ten thousand strong. But they had need of all their strength: for the enemy was at once numerous and skilful, elated by former success, and confident of present victory; the ramparts were lofty, the breaches steep and narrow, and Philippon's skill had prepared the most direful means of destruction for the dark and massy columns that stood in the British lines, with hearts beating for the assault.¹

25.
Philippon's preparations for defence.

Sixteen chosen companies were charged with the defence of the three breaches, and were arrayed behind the parapets which had been constructed on the *terrepleine* of the ramparts; immediately behind them was placed a strong battalion, in a retrenchment which had been formed in the rear of the menaced bastion; a company of sharpshooters occupied a raft which was floated in the inundation that immediately adjoined the foot of the breaches and flanked the assaulting columns; and another battalion was in reserve at the gate of Trinidad, ready to carry succour to any point which might require it. Every soldier had four loaded muskets beside him, to avoid the delay of charging them at the critical moment; shells were arranged in abundance along the parapet, to roll down on the assailants the moment they entered the ditch; heavy logs were provided, to crush whole files by their descending weight; and at the summit of each breach an immense beam of wood, sunk three feet deep into the earth at either extremity, was placed, thickly studded with sword-blades, with the sharp ends turned outwards, so as to defy entrance alike to strength and courage. Similar preparations, with

the exception of the sword-blades, were made at the castle and at the bastion of San Vincente, which were menaced by escalade ; and pits were dug, in considerable numbers, at the foot of the great breach, to entangle or suffocate the brave men who might have descended into the fosse. Relying on these preparations, and their own conscious resolution, the French soldiers confidently looked down from their lofty ramparts on the dark columns of the distant enemy, who were arrayed for the assault ; and many a gallant breast there throbbed not less ardently than those of the British host, for the decisive moment which was to decide this long-continued duel between the two nations.¹

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¹ Belm. iv.
349, 350.
Nap. iv.
419, 421.
Jones, ii.
75.

It was intended that the whole points should be assailed at once, and ten o'clock was the hour assigned for the attack. But a bomb having burst close to the third division, destined for the assault of the castle, and discovered their position, Picton was obliged to hurry on his assault : and as the ramparts now streamed out fire in all directions, the fourth and light divisions could no longer be restrained, but silently and swiftly advanced towards the breaches. At the same time, the guard in the trenches, leaping out with a loud shout, enveloped and carried the little outwork of San Roque, by which the column attacking the castle might have been enfiladed in flank. The storming party at the breaches were discovered as they reached the crest of the glacis, by the accidental explosion of a bomb, and its light showed the ramparts crowded with dark figures and glittering arms, which the next instant were shrouded in gloom. Still not a shot was fired on either side. Silently the hay packs were let down, the ladders placed to the counterscarp, and the forlorn-hopes and storming parties descended into the fosse. Five hundred of the bravest were already down and approaching the breaches, when a stream of fire shot upwards into the heavens, as if the earth had been rent asunder.² Instantly a crash, louder than the outburst of a volcano,

26.
Assault of
the great
breaches.

² Nap. 420,
422, Jones,
ii. 72; and
Sieges, i.
219, 220.
Belm. iv.
350, 351.

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27.
Terrific
struggle at
their foot.

was heard in the ditch, and the explosion of hundreds of shells and powder-barrels blew the men beneath to atoms.* For a moment only the light division paused on the edge of the crater; then, with a shout which drowned even the roar of the artillery, they leaped down into the fiery gulf, while at the same moment the fourth division came running up, and poured over with the like fury.

And now a scene ensued unparalleled even in the long and bloody annals of the revolutionary war. Boiling with intrepidity, the British columns came rushing on; and, the rear constantly urging on the front, pushed down, no one knew how, into the ditch. Numbers, from keeping too far to the right, fell into the part inundated, and were drowned; but the dead bodies filled up the ditch, and formed a ghastly bridge over which their comrades passed.† Others, inclining to the left, came to the dry part, and escaped a watery grave; but they did so only to fall into the still more appalling terrors of fire. The space into which both divisions had now descended was a fosse of very confined dimensions, with the enemy's rampart in front and on both flanks: so that the troops, crowded together in a narrow space at the bottom, were exposed to a plunging cross-fire on every side except their rear,¹ where stood a ravelin filled with British soldiers, whose loud cheers and incessant though ineffectual fire against the parapets, rather augmented than diminished

¹ Nap. iv.
424, 426.
Belm. iv.
350, 351.
Jones, ii.
72, 73.
Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
April 7,
1812. Gur.
ix. 41, 42.

* “Tornò la fiamma sparsa, tutta in una,
Che tra una ripa e l'altra ha 'l tutto pieno :
E tanto ascende in alto, ch' alla luna
Può d' appresso ascugar l' umido seno.
Sopra si volge oscura nebbia e bruna,
Che 'l sole adombra, e spegne ogni sereno.
Sentesi un scoppio in un perpetuo suono,
Simile a un grande e spaventoso tuono.

Aspro concento, orribile armonia
D' alte querele, d' ululi e di strida
Della misera gente che peria
Nel fondo.”

Orlando Furioso, xiv. 133.

† “Ce n'est que par le grand nombre qui sont noyés que le passage en est permis aux autres.”—BELMAS, iv. 351.

the general confusion. The enemy's shouts also, from the breaches and walls, were loud and terrible; and the bursting of the shells, the explosion of the powder-barrels, the heavy crash of the descending logs, the continued stream of fire from the ramparts, the roaring of the guns from either flank, and the distant thunder of the parallel batteries, which still threw howitzers on the breaches, formed a scene of matchless sublimity and horror.

Still, even in this awful situation, the gallantry of the officers and the devotion of the men prompted them to the most heroic efforts: the loud shouts of defiance from the enemy were answered by vehement cheers even from dying lips, and roused the English to maddened efforts; again and again bands of daring leaders, followed by the bravest of their followers, rushed up the breaches, and, despite every obstacle, reached the summits. Vain attempt! The ponderous beams, thickly studded with sword-blades, barred any farther progress; the numerous spikes scattered among the ruins transfixed their feet; discharges of grape and musketry, within pistol-shot on either flank, tore down their ranks; and even the desperation of the rear, who strove to force the front forward, in order to make a bridge of their writhing bodies, failed in shaking the steady girdle of steel. Some even strove to make their way under it, and, having forced their heads through, had their brains beat out by the but-ends of the enemy's muskets. Never since the invention of firearms had such a slaughter taken place within so narrow a space. For two hours the men continued in that living grave, disdaining to retreat, unable to advance; and it was not till two thousand had fallen in this scene of horror, that by Wellington's orders they retired to re-form for a second assault.¹

28.
Which, despite every effort, is unsuccessful.

¹ Life of Picton, ii. 106, 107. Philippon's Official Account, Belm. iv. 419. Jones's Sieges, i. 221, 223.

While this tremendous conflict was going on at the breaches, a struggle of a different, but hardly less violent kind, took place at the castle. There Picton's division were no sooner discovered by the explosion of the bomb

29.
The castle is assaulted by Picton.

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among their ranks, than the whole moved forward at a steady pace, about half an hour before the fight began at the breaches. They crossed the stream of the Rivillas by single file, under a terrible fire from the ramparts ; for the enemy brought every gun and musket to bear on the advancing mass, and the light which spread on all sides showed each man as clear as day. Rapidly forming on the other side, they rushed quickly up the rugged steep to the foot of the castle wall. There Kempt, who had hitherto headed the assault, was struck down, and Picton was left alone to conduct the column. To the soul of a hero, however, he united the skill of a general ; and well were both tried on that eventful night. Soon the palisades were burst through, and in ran Picton followed by his men ; but when they got through and reached the foot of the wall, the fire, almost perpendicular, was so violent that the troops wavered : in an instant the loud voice of their chief was heard above the din calling on them to advance, and they rushed on, bearing on their shoulders the ponderous scaling ladders, which were immediately raised against the wall.¹

Down in an instant, with a frightful crash, came huge logs of wood, heavy stones, shells, and hand-grenades ; while the musketry with deadly effect was plied from above, and the bursting projectiles, illuminating the whole battlements, enabled the enemy to take aim with unerring accuracy. Several of the ladders were broken by the weight of the throng who pressed up them ; and the men, falling from a great height, were transfixed on the bayonets of their comrades below, and died miserably. Still fresh assailants swarmed round the foot of the ladders ; hundreds had fallen, but hundreds remained eager for the fray. Macpherson of the 45th, and Pakenham,* reached the top of the rampart, but were instantly and severely wounded and thrown down.² Picton, though wounded, called to his men that they had never been

¹ Nap. iv.
420, 421.
Picton's
Mem. ii. 96,
99, Belm. iv.
350. Jones's
Sieges,
i. 220.

30.
Who is at
first re-
pulsed with
great loss.

² Picton's
Memoirs, ii.
96, 103.
Nap. iv.
420, 421.
Subaltern,
172. Belm.
iv. 350, 351.
Jones's
Sieges, i.
220, 221.

* Afterwards Sir Edward Pakenham.

defeated, and that now was the time to conquer or die. "If we cannot win the castle," said he, "let us die upon the walls." Animated by his voice, they again rushed forward, but again all the bravest were struck down. Picton himself was badly wounded; and his men, despite all their valour, were obliged to recoil, and take shelter under a projection of the hill.

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The assault seemed hopeless, when the reviving voice of Picton again summoned his soldiers to the attack; and he directed it a little to the right of the former attempt, where the wall was somewhat lower, and an embrasure promised some facility for entrance. There a young hero, Colonel Ridge of the 5th, who had already distinguished himself at Ciudad Rodrigo, sprang forward, and, calling on the men to follow, himself mounted the first ladder. "Canch," said he at the same time, "won't you lead the 5th?"* As quick as lightning, the latter ascended the steps of another ladder; his broadsword was in guard above his head; his trusty grenadier bayonets projected from behind on either side; and he was first on the summit. Ridge in a few seconds mounted the adjoining ladder ten yards to his left, and both stood side by side on the ramparts.† The shouting troops pressed up after

31.
It is at
length
carried.

* Lieutenant Canch of the grenadiers, 5th regiment, now Fort-major of Edinburgh Castle; who, when he mounted the rampart of the Castle of Badajoz, was suffering under a gunshot wound, yet unclosed, received on the summit of the great breach of Ciudad Rodrigo.—*United Service Journal*, August 1833, p. 545.

† "Són già sotto le mura. Allor Rinaldo
Scala drizzò di cento gradi e cento;
E lei con braccio maneggiò sì saldo,
Ch' agile è men picciola canna al vento.

* * *

Una selva di strali e di ruine
Sostien sul dosso, e sullo scudo un monte.
Scote una man le mura a se vicine,
L' altra sospesa in guardia è della fronte.

* * *

E vince alfin tutti i nemici, e sforza
L' aste e gl' intoppi che d' incontro aveva;
E sale il muro, e 'l signoreggia, e 'l rende
Sgombro e sicuro a chi di retro ascende."

Ger. Lib. xviii. § 75-78.

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¹ Picton's
Memoirs,
ii. 101, 103.
Nap. 420,
421. Belm.
iv. 354, 355.
Philippon's
Official
Account,
Belm. iv.
420, 421.

them, and the castle was won. Speedily the enemy were driven through the inner gate into the town ; but a reinforcement arrived from the French reserve ; a sharp firing took place at the gate, and Ridge fell in the glorious sepulchre which his sword had won. The enemy made but a slight resistance in the castle after the ramparts were gained, but the fighting was still severe in other quarters ; and Philippon, deeming the escalade of the castle impossible, disbelieved the officer who brought the account of it, and delayed to send succours till the English had established themselves in their important conquest.¹

32.
Walker's
division also
gets in by
escalade.

While these furious combats were going on at the breaches and in the castle, Walker, with his brigade, was escalading the distant bastion of San Vincente, so that the town was literally girdled with fire. They got near to the counterscarp undiscovered, and immediately, by means of their ladders, began to descend into the ditch ; but at that moment the moon shone out, they were observed, and a heavy fire began from the walls. The Portuguese in the division immediately threw down their ladders and fled ; but the British pushed on, and soon reached the foot of the rampart. It proved, however, to be thirty feet high ; the ladders were too short ; a mine was sprung beneath their feet ; the fire from the walls was quick and deadly ; and logs of wood and shells, thrown over, crushed or tore in pieces whole companies at once. Fortunately, during the alarm occasioned by the carrying of the castle, the assailants discovered a part of the scarp only twenty feet high ; and there three ladders were placed against an empty embrasure. The ladders, however, were still too short, and the first man who got up had to stoop down and draw up his comrades, after being pushed up by them. Instantly the crowds came rushing on ; and Walker himself, among the foremost, was struck down on the ramparts, severely but not mortally wounded. The troops immediately

advanced, with a rapid step and loud cheers, towards the breaches, where the incessant roar and awful conflagration told that the struggle was still going on. Strenuously fighting, they took several bastions, when the false alarm of a mine being sprung created a panic, and they were driven back almost to the one they had first won; but a battalion, left there, by a crashing volley arrested the pursuers, and the troops rallying again fought on towards the breaches, while another body marched towards the great square of the town. There their bugles sounded an English air in the heart of Badajoz; they were answered by a similar note from the castle. Soon the breaches were abandoned, and the victors poured in from all quarters; while Philippon crossed the bridge and took refuge in Fort Christoval, where he surrendered at discretion next morning, but not till he had sent off messengers to Soult to warn him of the disaster, in time to avert a greater one from himself.^{1*}

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¹Philippon's
Official
Account,
Belm. iv.
419, 422.
Nap. iv.
429, 430.
Belm. iv.
357, 358.
Jones, ii.
73, 74; and
Sieges, i.
225, 226.
Gurw. ix.
43, 47. Pic-
ton's Me-
moirs, ii.
113.

During the whole of this eventful night, Wellington remained in one position, near the quarries, anxiously listening to the awful roar, and receiving the accounts which the different aides-de-camp brought of the desperate resistance which the troops were encountering at the breaches. Albeit well aware of the dreadful loss which must be going forward, he calmly received the intelligence, knowing how much the fate of the war depended on perseverance at that decisive moment. At length an officer arrived from Picton's division, with intelligence that the castle was taken. "Who brings that intelligence?" said Wellington in his usual quick decided way. "Lieutenant Tyler," said the officer. "Ah, Tyler! well—are you

33.
Wellington's con-
duct during
the assault.

* For the description of this memorable assault, I have collated the inimitable narrative of Colonel Napier with the official despatch of Wellington in Gurwood's Despatches, and the animated accounts of Colonel Jones, Sir Thomas Picton's Memoirs, and the United Service Journal; and added many important facts from Philippon's official despatch, given, with many other valuable documents regarding the siege, in BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, iv. 369, 342.

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¹ Picton's
Memoirs,
ii. 118, 119.
United
Serv. Jour.
Nap. iv.
433.

34.
Magnitude
and import-
ance of the
conquest.

² Wellin-
ton to Lord
Liverpool,
April 7,
1812. Gur.
ix. 47, 49.
Jones, ii. 74.
Philippon's
Official
Account,
Belm. iv.
420, 422.

certain, sir?"—"I entered the castle with the troops, have just left it, and General Picton is in possession." "With how many men?"—"His division." "Return, sir, and desire General Picton to maintain his position at all hazards." Enthusiastic joy immediately took possession of all present; but when Wellington, at a subsequent period of the night, learned the full extent of the havoc made in his brave men, his wonted firmness gave way, and he yielded to a passionate burst of grief.¹

Five thousand men and officers had fallen in all during the siege, including seven hundred Portuguese. Of these, eight hundred were killed, and no less than three thousand five hundred had been struck down during the assault—an unparalleled loss, proving alike the skill and intrepidity of the defence, and the desperate valour of the attack. But the prize was immense, and the consequences of the triumph decisive, in the end, of the fate of the Peninsula. A place of the first order, with the preservation of which the honour of three French armies had been bound up, in the best condition, garrisoned by five thousand choice troops, and commanded by an officer of equal courage and ability, had been captured after a siege of nineteen days, only eleven of which had been with open trenches: less than half the time which Suchet, with equal means for the actual siege, had consumed in the reduction of Tarragona.* One hundred and seventy heavy guns, five thousand muskets, and eighty thousand shot, were found in the place; three thousand eight hundred men, including the governor, Philippon, were made prisoners; thirteen hundred had been killed or wounded since the commencement of the siege.² But, what was of far more importance than even the reduction of such a fortress in such a time and with such means, Wellington

* Suchet broke ground before Tarragona on the 21st May, and the place was finally carried by assault on the 28th June, a period of thirty-seven days. Suchet's force, which was all engaged in the siege, (the enemy's disturbing force in the rear being very trifling,) was 21,000; Wellington's at Badajoz, 22,000.—SUCHET'S *Memoirs*, ii. 51, 109; and *Ante*, Chap. LXV. § 71.

had now clearly obtained the superiority over the French generals. Their two border strongholds, alike a barrier for defence and a base for offensive operations on their side, had been reduced ; the path was smoothed for the English army into the heart of Spain ; and the disunion already obvious between the imperial marshals might be reasonably expected to be increased rather than diminished by a disaster which would expose them both to the storm of the Emperor's wrath.

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It would be well for the English historian if he could stop here, and could recount that his countrymen, after having displayed such heroic bravery in the assault, had not stained their victory by the usual excesses which, by the barbarous usages still observed in war, are so often, in the case of a town carried by assault, wreaked on the unoffending citizens. But this, unfortunately, is not the case : disorders and excesses of every sort prevailed ; and the British soldiery showed, by their conduct after the storm, that they inherited their full share of the sins, as well as the virtues, of the children of Adam. The disgraceful national vice of intemperance, in particular, broke forth in its most frightful colours. In spite of the utmost efforts of the officers to prevent it, disorder became universal. All the wine-shops and vaults were broken open and plundered ; pillage became universal ; every house was ransacked for valuables, spirits, or wine ; and crowds of drunken soldiers, for two days and nights, thronged the streets ; while the breaking open of doors and windows, the report of casual muskets, and the screams of the despoiled citizens, resounded on all sides. At length, on the third day, Wellington, highly incensed at the continuance of the disorders, marched two fresh divisions into the town ; a gallows was erected in the great square, a few of the worst plunderers were executed, and thus order was restored. Yet even amid these humiliating scenes many redeeming traits were exhibited ; the worst characters indeed there, as on all occasions where

35.
Disgraceful
pillage of
the town.

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¹ Compare
Nap. iv.
431. Jones,
ii. 76, and
United
Service
Journal, *voce*
Assault of
Badajoz.

36.
Reflections
on the dis-
orders and
horrors after
the assault.

popular passions obtain full vent, were the leaders ; but hundreds risked, and many lost their lives in endeavouring to put a stop to the violence. No blood of the unresisting was shed, and comparatively few of the more atrocious crimes usual on such occasions were committed. While the French conquest of Tarragona was disgraced by the slaughter, on their own admission, of four thousand chiefly unarmed citizens,* the British storm of Badajoz exhibited the glorious trophy of as many desperate and bloodstained enemies rescued from death in the moment of hard-earned victory : the very horror which the British officers at the time felt and have since expressed at the brutal excesses of the men, only shows how repugnant such usages were to the mild and humane spirit which prevailed in the British army.¹

The Duke of Wellington said in parliament, on occasion of the Chartist insurrection at Birmingham in July 1839, that he had seen in his life many towns taken by storm, but he had never seen a town treated as that city was in that quarter where the rioters had gained the superiority. This observation is clearly well founded in the sense in which it was obviously meant—viz., that no part of Badajoz, or any other town he had seen taken by assault, was treated so horribly as that part of Birmingham was where the rioters got the mastery : for if the Chartists had had possession of that town for three days, as the troops had of Badajoz, they would have burned and destroyed the whole edifices it contained. In two hours three hundred Chartists in the Bull-ring burned three houses, gutted thirty, and consumed by fire the whole furniture which they had dragged out before the eyes of the owners ; while nothing but plunder and intoxication, with a few casual conflagrations, took place at Badajoz, even during the three days the disorders

* “ Cette nuit fut horrible : le sang des Espagnols inondait les rues de cette malheureuse cité, et tout y présentait le spectacle affreux mais inévitable d’une ville prise d’assaut. Les Espagnols perdirent quatre mille hommes, tant de la garnison que des habitants.”—BELMAS, *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, iii. 547.

lasted. Memorable examples of the increasing moderation which the humanity of recent times has infused even into the most awful of all moments, that of a town taken by assault, and of the furious passions which democratic delusion has in the same era spread among the corrupted members of an opulent and pacific community!

Soult, never dreaming of this powerful fortress being carried in so short a period, that there hardly seemed to be time for the breaching batteries to have approached the body of the place, had set out from Seville on the 31st March, with the whole force which he could collect, and debouched by Guadalcanal into the south of Estremadura on the 4th April. On the 7th he was advancing from Fuente del Maestro to Santa Marta, at no great distance from Badajoz, with twenty-five thousand men, prepared to give battle to Hill's covering force, which was just before him, when the horsemen detached by Philippon brought the intelligence of the fall of that fortress. He immediately retraced his steps with great celerity, and regained Seville by the 14th; for he was in no condition to fight the whole English army; and the Andalusian capital—which was menaced by Villemur and Morillo, who had issued out of Portugal with four thousand men, and already approached to within ten miles of it—loudly called for his protection. In the course of the retreat, however, the British horse, two thousand strong, came up with him near Usagre, and a brilliant action took place between the former, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, and an equal force of the enemy, who were broken and pursued four miles in great disorder, with the loss of a hundred and thirty prisoners, besides nearly as many killed and wounded.¹

A great game now lay before the English general, and he was strongly tempted to play it. Soult, with a disposable army of twenty-five thousand men only, was in Andalusia, and even by raising the siege of Cadiz, and exposing his troops to be assailed in rear by the powerful

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37.
Soult's advance from Andalusia, and retreat to it.—
Atlas,
Plate 48.April 12.
¹ Belm. i.
219, 220.
Nap. iv.
434, 435.

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38.

Wellington's project
of attacking
Soult in
Andalusia.¹ Gurw. ix.
42.

April 1.

² Gurw. ix.
68, 69.
Beamish, ii.
47. Belm.
iv. 220.

39.

Which is
prevented by
Marmont's
irruption
into Beira.

April 14.

garrison of that city, he could only bring forty thousand into the field; and though they were among the very best troops in the French army, and commanded by one of their ablest generals, yet with forty-five thousand British and Portuguese, who were now gathered round his standards, Wellington might hope to strike a decisive blow against that important branch of the enemy's force. That he entertained this design is now proved by his despatches;¹ but he soon received intelligence from the north which compelled him to forego these prospects, brilliant though they were, and attend to the vital point of preserving his communications with his base of operations. Marmont having with infinite difficulty collected fifteen days' provisions for his troops, an indispensable preliminary to entering upon the wasted districts around Ciudad Rodrigo, had advanced from Salamanca in the beginning of April, and immediately advanced to that fortress, which he invested. Thence pushing on past Almeida, he entered Beira with above thirty-five thousand men, ravaging it with the utmost cruelty; and Trant and Wilson, who had assembled the militia of the province, even with the aid of the troops which Wellington had left to guard the frontier, were unable to offer any effectual resistance, as Silveira had not yet come up with that of Entre-Douro-e-Minho.²

Trant, however, was not discouraged; and that enterprising officer even formed the daring design of surprising the French marshal in his headquarters at Sabugal. This was only prevented by the singular coincidence of Marmont having on the same night formed a project of carrying off the English commander, which failed from a single drummer having accidentally discovered the approach of his horsemen, and beat the alarm. The enemy having approached Celorica, Wilson, after having remained at his post there to the last moment, retreated after having destroyed the magazines. In the retreat to that place, the French came up with the rearguard of

the retiring militia near the Mondego, who immediately, despite all the efforts of their officers, dispersed and fled ; and Marmont, taking advantage of the consternation, pushed on to Castel Branco, where there were large magazines, which, however, were fortunately transported in safety to the south of the Tagus ; while Victor Alten, with his German dragoons, crossed that river at Villa Velha, leaving the northern provinces wholly uncovered.¹

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1812.

April 15.
1 Gurw. ix.
68, 69.
Belm. iv.
220. Beam.
ii. 47. Jones,
ii. 78. Nap.
iv. 445, 448.

Urgent as affairs had now become to the north of the Tagus, Wellington would not have been diverted by these predatory alarms from his great object of attacking Soult in Andalusia ; but the state of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida was such as to call for immediate attention. Notwithstanding the most urgent representations of the English general, the Spanish government had taken no steps for provisioning the former of these fortresses, and the Portuguese Regency had been so remiss in their exertions for putting the latter into a good state of defence, that it was hardly secure against a *coup-de-main*. These circumstances rendered it indispensable for Wellington to return immediately to the Agueda ; and accordingly, after lingering in the neighbourhood of Badajoz a few days, in the hope that Soult, stung by the loss of that fortress, would fight a battle to retrieve his credit, he broke up for the north upon finding that the French marshal had finally retired into Andalusia. The army crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha, and resumed its old position at Fuente Guinaldo : Sir Thomas Graham, who was left with a corps of ten thousand men at Badajoz, soon repaired the breaches, and put the place in a posture of defence : while Marmont retired without loss across the frontier, and put his army into cantonments at Salamanca and on the Douro.²

40.
Wellington
moves to
the Agueda.

April 21.

²Wellington
to Lord
Liverpool,
April 7,
1812. Gur.
ix. 47. Belm.
220, 221.
Nap. iv.
448.

Both parties, after this short but bloody campaign, stood absolutely in need of repose ; and the exhausted state of the country rendered it impossible for the British army to move before the young green crops afforded a

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1812.

41.

Wellington's efforts in his cantonments to supply the taken fortresses.

¹ Wellington to Sir H. Wellesley, April 28, 1812. Gurw. ix. 98.

² Nap. iv. 448, 449. Gur. ix. 98. Wellington to Sir H. Wellesley, May 3, 1812. *Ibid.* ix. 111.

42.
Napoleon's anger at the fall of Badajoz.

supply of food for the horses ; or the French, until the harvest had afforded the means of replenishing the magazines of the men. Wellington employed this interval in the most strenuous exertions to put the frontier fortresses in a good state of defence ; and as the supineness of the Spanish authorities inspired him with a serious dread "that he would lose both Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz before the summer was over, by the habits of indolence and delay in the Spanish nation,"¹ he took the most extraordinary measures to guard against the danger. With this view, he laid on the Portuguese government the personal responsibility of victualling Elvas and Badajoz, and employed the whole of the carriages and mules belonging to his own army in bringing up supplies to Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, his troops being meanwhile quartered in such a manner as to cover the lines of transit. In this way, the object of putting both the captured fortresses in a state of defence was at length with infinite difficulty accomplished, which never would have been done by the Spanish authorities, although this year, in addition to other assistance, they got a million sterling in specie from the British government.^{2*}

Great was the indignation of the French Emperor when he learned the disaster at Badajoz ; which he felt the more keenly, as matters had now proceeded to such a point in the negotiations with Russia, that war in the north was plainly inevitable, and was openly prepared for by both the powers. It was entirely in consequence of his own absurd orders, that the fortress had been taken ; for Marmont had clearly pointed out, in good time, that Wellington was too well aware of the destitute

* "If the Spanish government insists upon my placing garrisons in the forts we have taken from the enemy, and I have made over to them, and do not take measures to place and support in them proper garrisons, I now give them notice I will destroy both Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz ; for I cannot be tied by the leg to guard these fortresses against the consequence of their failure to garrison or provision them."—WELLINGTON to SIR H. WELLESLEY, 3d May 1812 ; GURW. ix. 111.

condition of his army as to provisions, to be diverted from his project by an irruption into Beira ; and that, unless both he and Soult succoured Badajoz, it would infallibly be taken.* Though he could thus with reason censure no one but himself for the disaster, Napoleon, according to his usual custom, laid the blame in every other quarter : upbraided Marmont bitterly for not having acted with more vigour on the side of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida ; reproached Soult that he did nothing with eighty thousand of the best troops in the world ; and announced his intention, upon his return from Poland, of assuming in person the direction of affairs in the Peninsula.¹ †

¹ Belm. i.
217, 218.

Meanwhile, however, he deemed the time now arrived when he might begin to throw off the mask, and carry into execution his long-cherished project for the incorporation of the northern provinces of Spain with the French empire. Catalonia, accordingly, was declared an integral part of the French territory, and divided into four departments, each with its chief town, prefect, and all the other appendages of the empire. Great undertakings were at the same time set on foot, to insure the communication between the eastern Pyrenees and the banks of the Ebro. A new highway was opened

43.
Incorporation of Catalonia with the French empire.
Jan. 26.

* "The Emperor's orders are so precise for me to assemble my army in Old Castile, that, whatever my own opinion may be on the subject, I consider it my duty to conform to them ; but I have done so without any hope of a good result. The Emperor appears to attach great weight to the effect which my demonstrations in the north will produce on the mind of Lord Wellington. I venture to entertain a contrary opinion, as I know that that general is well aware that we have no magazines, and appreciates the immense difficulties which the country presents, from the impossibility of getting subsistence. Lord Wellington knows perfectly that the army of Portugal at this season is incapable of acting, and that, if it advanced beyond the frontier, it would be forced to return after a few days, after having lost all its horses. He will never be disquieted by apprehensions of a siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, as he knows we have no heavy artillery. The Emperor has ordered great works at Salamanca ; he appears to forget that we have neither provisions to feed the workmen nor money to pay them, and that we are in every service on the verge of starvation."—MARMONT to BERTHIER, 2d March 1812, No. 94 ; BELMAS, i. Appendix.

† "Instead of studying and seeking to catch the spirit of the Emperor's instructions, you seem to have taken a pleasure in not understanding them,

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from Mongat to Cabello, a distance of ten leagues, to avoid the fire of the English cruisers, which in that part of the old road commanded its course; another from Figueras to Olot, to avoid the defiles of Castelfolliit, so celebrated in the Wars of the Succession; two others were opened from Palamos on the coast to Gerona; and a third commenced from Palamos to Figueras by Pals, across the often flooded plains which lay between the great canal and the Ter. Fresh fortified posts were everywhere established, and several points strongly barricaded; in particular, the convent of the Capucines at Mataro. Thus everything conspired to indicate that Napoleon was resolutely bent on consolidating the annexation of Catalonia to the French empire; and yet never was a step more injudicious in itself, or more likely to prove prejudicial to his own interests and that of his family in that country. It at once entailed a burdensome acquisition on France, the evils of defending which would probably exceed its advantages; overstepped the durable barrier which nature has for ever established between the two kingdoms in the Pyrenees; exasperated his brother, for the preservation of whose throne he had made such long-continued efforts, and alienated the affection even of his own partisans in the Peninsula,¹ from a

¹ See Decree, Jan. 26, 1812. Belm. i. Nap. 97, App. and i. 225.

and to have carried out directly the reverse of their intentions. The Emperor earnestly recommends you to do your utmost to prevent forty thousand English from ruining the affairs of Spain, which will infallibly happen if the commanders of the different corps are not animated by that zeal for the public service, and pure patriotism, which can alone vanquish every obstacle, and prevent any sacrifice of the public interest to individual humour. On his return from Poland, the Emperor will himself take the command in Spain."—BERTHIER to MARMONT, 16th April 1812; BELMAS, No. 95, App. vol. i.

"The Emperor asks himself, Duke, how is it possible that six thousand English, and four or five thousand Portuguese, have carried off the magazines of Merida, advanced to the confines of Andalusia, and remained there a month in presence of your army, composed of eighty thousand of the best troops in the world, and able to assemble sixty thousand present under arms, with a cavalry so superior in numbers? Form instantly a corps of twenty thousand men of your best troops, and enter the Alentejo. This order is imperative. The Emperor is distressed that so noble an army has yet achieved nothing against the English."—BERTHIER to SOULT, 19th February 1812; BELMAS, i. App. No. 92, p. 625.

dynasty which thus commenced its career by inducing the partition of the monarchy.

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44.
Reduction
in the
French
force in
the Penin-
sula.

Considerable reductions took place in the French troops in the Peninsula in May, in consequence of the necessity to which the Emperor was reduced of accumulating his whole disposable force to swell the enormous preparations for the Russian campaign. Dorsenne re-entered France with the Imperial Guard, ten thousand strong; the division Palombini was drawn from Suchet in the kingdom of Valencia; and the armies of the south, of the centre, and of Portugal, were weakened by twelve thousand veteran infantry, and two divisions of dragoons; while six Polish regiments, under Chlopiki, took their course from the army of Aragon for the shores of the Vistula. The total amount of the troops thus withdrawn was little short of forty thousand men; but the imperial muster-rolls still exhibited an array of two hundred and eighty thousand soldiers in Spain, of whom two hundred and thirty thousand were present with the eagles.* On the other hand, the British forces in Portugal at this period amounted to fifty-three thousand infantry, cavalry, and artillery, of whom seven thousand five hundred were horse; and the Portuguese were about twenty-seven thousand—in all eighty thousand men.† But though the health of the troops materially improved in May, while they lay in cantonments on the Coa, yet such was the general sickness which prevailed, especially among the newly arrived regiments, at a subsequent period, that the whole force which Wellington could ever, during the

* See *Imperial Muster-Rolls*, 15th May 1812, Appendix, A, Chap. LXVIII.

† The exact numbers of the British were, on 25th March 1812,

Infantry,	.	.	.	42,289
Cavalry,	.	.	.	7,558
Artillery,	.	.	.	3,322

Total, . . . 53,169

The loss at Badajoz was more than compensated by reinforcements which arrived in May, before the troops took the field. — *Adjutant-General's Report*, Appendix, 18; JONES, vol. ii.

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campaign, collect under his standards, was fifty-seven thousand men. Of these twelve thousand were under the orders of Hill in Estremadura, and forty-five thousand under his own command on the Ciudad Rodrigo frontier. Thus, so immense were the resources of the French Emperor, that, notwithstanding all his drafts for the Russian war, his effective forces in the Peninsula were still four times as numerous as those of the English general; and it must always be a matter of pride to the British historian, that both Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz had been taken, and the flood of imperial fortune turned to ebb, before any drafts had been made from the French armies in Spain, and when Wellington was still confronted by the immense force with which Napoleon had laid his iron grasp on the Peninsula.¹

¹ Nap. v.
618. Jones,
ii. 377, Ap-
pendix.
Belm. i.
227.

45.
Improved
character
of the Bri-
tish army
at this pe-
riod.

The Anglo-Portuguese army, however, had now, from the experience of five successive campaigns, attained to an extraordinary degree of perfection; and its central position and water-carriage in rear, in a great measure compensated its inferiority in numbers to the vast but scattered legions of Napoleon. It was no longer a body of brave and disciplined but inexperienced men, admirable for a single fight, but unacquainted with the varied duties, and sinking under the protracted fatigues of a campaign: experience, the best of all instructors, had in a few years conferred ages of education. Necessity, the mother not less of acquisition than of invention, had made both soldiers and officers acquainted with their most important duties; suffering, the most effectual regulator of impetuous dispositions, had cooled down the undue vehemence of youthful aspiration into the regulated valour of tried subordination. The British army now set forth in its career, confident not merely of conquering the enemy in the field, but of prevailing over him in the campaign. The difficulties of sieges, the duties of retreat, the necessity of protracted evolutions, had become familiar to all. It was universally felt that

war is a complicated as well as a difficult science, but that there were none of its contingencies with which the British soldiers were not familiar, and none of its duties to which the British generals were not adequate. For the first time in English history, a British army now took the field in numbers somewhat approaching to those of the Continental powers, and with the experience of actual warfare superadded to the native courage of the Anglo-Saxon race, and the acquired energy of English freedom. And in the consequences of this combination—the campaigns of Salamanca, Vitoria, and Waterloo—is to be seen the clearest evidence of the incalculable effect it was fitted to have produced on human affairs, and decisive proof of the universal empire to which it must have led, if its freeborn energies, like those of Rome, had been exclusively directed to military conquest, and its mission from Providence, instead of being the spreading the blessings of religion and the light of knowledge through the wilderness of nature, had been that of subjugating the states of civilised man.¹

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LXVIII.
1812.

¹ Jones, ii.
90. Nap.
v. 9, 10.

The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, like the wrenching out of two huge corner-stones, loosened the whole fabric of French power in Spain; nothing was wanting but a blow at its heart to make the whole edifice crumble into ruins. But whether to deliver that blow against Marmont in the north, or Jourdan in the centre, was the question. Wellington, judging like Napoleon that the vital point in Spain was the line of communication between Bayonne and Madrid, wisely chose the former; but, before commencing his operations, he resolved to strike a blow at the French fortifications recently erected at Almaraz, which commanded the important bridge of boats over the Tagus at that place, their shortest and best line of communication from the southern to the northern banks of the river. All the permanent bridges, from Toledo downwards, had

46.
Description
of the
French
forts at the
bridge of
Almaraz.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Berthier
to Marmont,
July 10,
1811. Belm.
i. 580.

been destroyed by one or other of the belligerents in the course of the war; and the roads leading from them, being almost all over mountain ridges, were scarcely practicable for carriages. Sensible of the importance of the only one remaining at Almaraz, Napoleon had some time before directed Marmont to construct strong works at both its extremities, capable of securing them alike against the Spanish guerillas and the British incursions; and the French marshal had, in pursuance of his instructions, constructed forts at that important point of a very solid description.¹ On the left bank, the bridge was protected by the *tête-de-pont*, Lugar Nuevo. In front of that work, and to secure an eminence which commanded it on the left bank, was the Fort Napoleon, a semicircular redoubt constructed of earth, and commanded in the gorge by a square loopholed tower of solid masonry. At a still greater distance, about a league from the Tagus, the fort of Mirabete had been constructed in the gorges of the mountains, forming the southern barrier of the valley of the Tagus, and commanding the road to Truxillo, the only route in that quarter practicable for artillery. Finally, on the right bank of the Tagus was the Fort Ragusa, placed on an eminence a hundred yards from the river, so situated as to command the other fortifications at the bridge-head, and deprive the enemy of an advantageous point for attacking them; it was a square fort with bastions, having within it a high masonry tower of four feet in thickness, loopholed, and enclosing a great depot of provisions. These works were armed with eighteen pieces of cannon, and garrisoned by a battalion and several companies of gunners; in all, about eleven hundred men.²

² Belm. i.
221, 222.
Hill's Des-
patches,
May 21,
1812. Gur.
ix. 185.
Nap. v. 11.
Jones, ii.
93.

47.
Hill's pre-
parations
for the
attack.

To destroy these formidable fortifications at this important passage, Hill was intrusted with a light column of six thousand men, including four hundred horse, and twelve light and six heavy guns. The operation, however, which had been originally projected by Wellington

previous to the attack on Badajoz, had now become one of extreme difficulty; for not only was Drouet, with nine thousand men belonging to Soult's forces, lying at Hinojoza, nearer to Merida than Hill was to Almaraz, but Foy's division of Marmont's army was at Talavera, in the valley of the Tagus; and d'Armagnac, with a considerable body from the army of the centre, was also in the neighbourhood of that river. Thus, when the English general advanced so far up the valley of the Tagus as Almaraz, he was in a manner surrounded by enemies; for two divisions, each stronger than his own, lay at no great distance in his front; and another, by a rapid march, might from the south intercept his retreat. To provide against these dangers, Graham, with two divisions and Cotton's cavalry, was advanced to the neighbourhood of Portalegre, so as to be in a situation to advance to Hill's support if required. But still Drouet, by a rapid march, might interpose between him and Hill, and beat them in detail; and the French in the upper part of the valley of the Tagus might suddenly fall with superior forces upon the troops so far pushed on as the bridge of Almaraz, and destroy them before any succour arrived. Thus the utmost celerity and secrecy were essential to the success of the enterprise.¹

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LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Nap. v.
13. Jones,
ii. 93. Belm.
i. 222.

The better to deceive the enemy as to the real point of attack, rumours were spread that the invasion of Andalusia was in contemplation, and the militia of the Alentejo were moved towards Niebla, to give the greater appearance of probability to the account; while the bridge at Merida, which had been broken down during the operations against Badajoz, was restored with the professed intention of transporting Hill's battering and pontoon train, which had been formed at Elvas, to the same destination. These precautions so completely imposed upon the enemy, that, although the bridge at Merida required a fortnight for its repair, and Hill, in consequence, could not break up from his cantonments

48.
Hill's at-
tack on
Almaraz.

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LXVIII.

1812.
May 16.

May 17.

at Almendralejo till the 12th, no suspicion existed on the part of the French generals as to the quarter where the blow was to be struck. On the morning of the 16th the troops reached Jaraicejo, and the following day arrived at the mountain range which separates the valley of the Tagus from that of the Guadiana, and in the highest part of the gorge in which the castle of Mirabete was placed. By drawing a range of fieldworks from this fort across the pass to a fortified house on the other side of the main road, the French had completely blocked up the only route practicable for artillery from the Guadiana to Almaraz. After reconnoitring the works in the pass, Hill, finding that the delay which had occurred in the march of his troops had rendered a surprise impossible, judged it most advisable not to attempt to force a passage; but, leaving his artillery at the summit of the sierra, at dark the next evening, began to descend a rugged road, passable only for infantry, by the village of Romangorda, towards Almaraz; and, by taking every imaginable precaution against discovery, reached the close vicinity of Fort Napoleon, unobserved by the enemy, before daybreak on the following morning.¹

¹ Hill's Despatches,
May 20,
1812, *Gaz.*
ix. 186.
Nap. v. 16,
17. *Jones*,
ii. 93.

49.
Storming of
the forts.
May 19.

Though the head of the column under General Howard got to the point of attack in such good time, yet such were the difficulties of a march six miles long through the mountains, that a considerable time elapsed before the rear was sufficiently closed up to permit an attack. Fortunately, during this anxious interval, the troops were concealed by a deep intervening ravine and some small hills from the enemy's observation; and the French soldiers on Fort Napoleon were crowding the ramparts, listening to the sound of cannon which now came rolling down from Fort Mirabete, and observing the volumes of smoke which mingled with the clouds on the summit of the sierra, when a loud shout broke on their ears, and the rush of British bayonets was upon them. Though surprised at the suddenness of the attack, they were not

unprepared, as they had received intelligence of Hill's being in the vicinity, and the garrison of Fort Napoleon had in consequence been strongly reinforced by some troops in the neighbourhood. A crashing volley of grape and musketry at once struck the head of the British column; but the men rushed on, headed by the gallant Howard, in the most undaunted manner, and, applying the scaling ladders to the scarp, commenced the escalade. The ladders were much too short for the whole height, but they enabled them to reach an intermediate ledge or *berm*, as it is technically called; and having got up, the assailants found it so broad that the ladders were a second time applied from it as a base, and the summit was reached. Instantly a loud cheer announced the success of the enterprise; the soldiers from behind came rushing over; victors and vanquished, pell-mell, swept on to the central tower, which was carried in the first tumult of success. The garrison, upon this, fled in dismay to the bridge, closely followed by the pursuers, who, in the general confusion, got through the *tête-de-pont*; while the governor of Fort Ragusa, on the opposite side, seized with a sudden panic, not only cut the bridge before half his own men had got over, but hastily, and before he was attacked, abandoned his own fort, and retreated to Talavera. Thus the whole works on both sides of the river, with all their artillery and immense stores, fell into the hands of the British, who also made two hundred and fifty prisoners, among whom was the governor of Fort Napoleon, with the loss only of a hundred and eighty men.¹

Having effected this brilliant exploit, Hill immediately destroyed all the forts, burned the bridge and stores, and on the same day retraced his steps to Fort Mirabete in the mountains, which, entirely isolated and environed by enemies, might now be expected to fall an easy prey. In effect, operations, with every prospect of success, were commencing next day against this stronghold, against which the heavy guns had already been brought up,

¹ Hill's Report, Gurw. ix. 186. Nap. v. 19, 20. Jones, ii. 93, 94. Belm. i. 221, 222. Vict. et Cong. xxi. 35, 36.

50.
Mirabete is saved by a false alarm, and Hill retires to Badajoz.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

May 26.

when an incorrect report, transmitted by Sir William Erskine, as to Soult with a formidable force being already in Estremadura, obliged Hill, much against his will, to abandon this second prize when just about to fall into his hands, and retire to Merida, which he reached on the 26th, after having suffered no molestation from the enemy. Foy meanwhile hastened from Talavera to Almaraz with his division ; but he arrived only in time to witness the expiring flames of the conflagration which had consumed the bridge and works ; and Hill quietly resumed his old quarters in the neighbourhood of Badajoz. Wellington, however, who was aware that Erskine's false alarm was occasioned entirely by an exaggerated and confused account of Drouet's movements, and that Soult was too far distant to be capable of doing mischief, was justly dissatisfied at this unlucky mistake, which rendered the success of the enterprise not so complete as it otherwise might have been ; and he expressed his complaints on the want of judgment in separate command on the part even of his bravest generals in his private despatches to government. But the truth is, that the evil was owing to a general cause, not imputable to any individual as a fault ; and it is part of the price which the nation pays for those free institutions, and that general intelligence to which its greatness has been owing. They bring the mass of the people, who are incapable of judging correctly on the subject, to pass an opinion on the actions of all public functionaries, and thus paralyse them, when left to their own responsibility, by the painful reflection, that difficulty will not be considered, nor failure forgiven, by those to whom, nevertheless, the final decision on all measures of importance is committed.¹

¹ Wellington to Lord Liverpool, May 28, 1812. *Gaz. ix. 191. Nap. v. 21.*

51.
Defeat of
Ballasteros
in Andalusia.
June 1.

Ballasteros took advantage of the absence of Soult, during his march towards Estremadura, to attack with his whole force, six thousand strong, a French detachment stationed at Bornos, a central position between Cadiz and Seville, which covered the principal communications

between these points. This attempt, however, proved most unfortunate; and demonstrated how little reliance, notwithstanding all their experience and suffering, was to be placed on the Spanish troops. Conroux, who commanded the French, cautiously kept within his intrenched camp, as if fearful of a combat. This led the presumptuous Spaniards to imagine that he would fall an easy prey; and they accordingly assaulted the intrenched camp in a very disorderly manner. The result was as might easily have been foreseen. So far from waiting for the enemy behind his fieldworks, Conroux sallied forth unexpectedly upon them as they first came within fire, and instantly put them to the rout with the loss of above fifteen hundred killed and wounded. The remainder, utterly disorganised, were driven for refuge to their old quarters in the camp of St Roque, under the cannon of Gibraltar. This disaster was the more sensibly felt by Wellington, that it enabled Soult, now relieved from all disquietude about his rear, to reinforce Drouet in Estremadura with two divisions of cavalry and one of infantry, which raised his force to twenty-one thousand men, of whom three thousand were superb horse; and this at a time when the imprudent daring of the English dragoons under Slade drew them, in an action with the French cavalry under Lallemand, into an ambuscade, where they were ultimately defeated with the loss of one hundred and fifty men.¹

¹ Jones, ii.
95. Tor. v.
29, 30. Nap.
v. 61, 63.
Gurw. ix.
240. Vict.
et Conq.
xxi. 56, 57.

As matters had now assumed a serious aspect in Estremadura, and Wellington was anxious to be relieved from all anxiety in that quarter before undertaking his projected offensive movement in the northern provinces, he raised the force under Hill, who had assumed the command there in consequence of Sir Thomas Graham having been obliged by ill health to return to England, to the amount of twenty thousand British and Portuguese, and three thousand Spaniards, of whom two thousand five hundred were horse; and recommended him, if pressed, to fall back and give battle on the old field of Albuera. Drouet's

52.
Defensive
measures
in Estre-
madura.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

force, though somewhat inferior in numerical amount, was fully equal in real efficiency, from the homogeneous quality of the troops of which it was composed; and everything, therefore, seemed to prognosticate a second important battle to the south of Badajoz. Nevertheless it did not take place, and the early period of the campaign passed away without any event of note in that quarter. Drouet, whose instructions from Soult were discretionary, to fight or not as occasion might offer, was too strongly impressed with the recollection of the dreadful battle last year at Albuera, to venture upon a second action on equal terms on the same ground, and accordingly he did not advance beyond Almendralejo. On the other hand, Hill, whom the brilliant and daring exploits at Aroyo des Molinos and Almaraz had inspired with a well-founded confidence both in his own talents and the quality of his soldiers, had the rare patriotic spirit to obtain the mastery of the strongest motives of individual ambition, and risk nothing where he might fairly have anticipated earning immortal fame, lest he should interfere with the grand operations undertaken by Wellington in person on the banks of the Tormes.¹

¹ Wellington to Hill, June 6, 1812. Gur. ix. 218. Nap. v. 63.

Wellington's preparations for this important movement had now nearly reached their maturity. With infinite care he had established a powerful military police in his army, the officers of which were intrusted with the most extensive powers of summary chastisement, and which promised to produce, as in effect it did, that incomparable discipline and order in the field, by which, not less than its astonishing victories, this army was ever afterwards distinguished. A month's provision for the army was by the greatest efforts got together, and stored in Ciudad Rodrigo, even though the scarcity of money at headquarters at that period was such—owing to the vast preparations of France and Russia for the gigantic contest approaching in the north of Europe, as well as the long-continued drain of the Peninsular war—that specie

53.
Wellington's preparations for the invasion of Spain.

was absolutely not to be had, and the English general had never, since the commencement of the contest, been reduced to such straits by its want.¹ Several hundred carts, which had been collected for the siege of Badajoz, were suddenly moved towards Ciudad Rodrigo from the neighbourhood of that fortress and the Caldao river, where they had been hitherto employed in the important work of victualling its garrison for two months, which had at length been accomplished; the heavy howitzers and some eighteen-pounders were secretly fitted on travelling-carriages at Almeida; and by the genius of Colonel Sturgeon of the engineers, the broken arch in the noble Roman bridge of Alcantara, a hundred feet wide and nearly a hundred and thirty high, was restored by means of a suspension communication formed of cables, so strongly twisted together, and so firmly fastened at either end, that the heaviest guns passed over in safety. Thus a more direct line of intercourse across the Tagus was opened between the two British armies than that of which they had formerly made use at Villa Velha.²

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LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Gurw. ix.
142, 143.² Jones, ii.
95, 96. Gur.
ix. 227, 230.
Nap. iv.
372.

So vast were the French forces still in the Peninsula, notwithstanding all the drafts for the Russian war, that Soult was not only secure in Andalusia, but at the very time when Wellington was preparing for a great irruption into the northern provinces of Spain, he was taking measures for an invasion of the southern ones of Portugal. His plans for this purpose had for nearly two years been in preparation; and with such prudence were they conceived, and so large was the force at his disposal for their execution, that it was a mere question of time which general should move first; and which, by obtaining the initiative, should succeed in driving the other from the Peninsula. For the success of this design it was indispensable that his rear should be secured, save against an incursion from the Isle of Leon, in which quarter Victor's gigantic lines appeared a sufficient barrier; and with this

^{54.}
Soult's
plans at
this period.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

view he had resolved to crush Ballasteros, reduce Tarifa, Alicante, and Carthagena; and having thus pacified Andalusia, to intrust its defence to Victor and the Spanish troops, nearly twenty thousand strong, raised in the province; while he himself, with his whole disposable force, about forty thousand veteran troops, should carry the war into the Alentejo, and threaten Lisbon on its least protected side. The effect of this, he hoped, even in the least favourable view, would be to draw Wellington back to his old stronghold at Torres Vedras; Marmont could meanwhile operate against his retiring columns; and even if he were able to make head against both, still the result would be, that the credit of the French arms would be restored, new fields of plunder opened, and the war driven up into a corner of the Peninsula. The repulse at Tarifa, in the close of the preceding year, had delayed this project; but the rashness and consequent rout of Ballasteros at Bornos had again smoothed the way for its execution. He only waited for the reaping of the harvest, to collect provisions for the enterprise: and in the meanwhile, the better to conceal his real object, he began a serious bombardment of the long-beleaguered Isle of Leon; and huge mortars, constructed to carry three miles, from the advanced works of Trocadero now for the first time carried the flames of war into the streets of Cadiz.¹

May 16.
¹Nap. v. 57,
58. Belm. i.
228. Soult's
Papers in
Nap. *ut*
supra.

55.
Forces of
the French
in Spain.

From intercepted returns which at this period fell into Wellington's hands, through the never-ceasing activity of the Spanish guerillas, the real force at the disposal of the French marshals was accurately ascertained, and it was still much more considerable than he had been led to imagine. Suchet had seventy-six thousand men in Catalonia and Valencia, of whom sixty thousand were present with the eagles; forty-nine thousand, of whom thirty-eight thousand were effective, composed the army of the north in Biscay and Navarre, of which two divisions were destined to reinforce Marmont; nineteen

thousand, nearly all effective, lay under Jourdan at Madrid, and might be reckoned on as a reserve to support any quarter which might be exposed to danger ; while, exposed to the brunt of the conflict, Soult, with sixty-three thousand, of whom fifty-six thousand were present with the eagles, occupied Andalusia and the southern parts of Estremadura ; and Marmont with seventy thousand, of whom fifty-two thousand were effective, guarded Leon, Old Castile, and the Asturias, in addition to twelve thousand who were on the march to join him from France. In all, three hundred thousand men, of whom two hundred and forty thousand were effective in the field, besides forty thousand Spaniards, who had been enrolled under the imperial banners and brought to a comparatively efficient state : a mighty array—strong in its numbers, its generals, its discipline, and its recollections ; but weakened by internal divisions, paralysed by the devastation of plunder, scattered for the necessity of subsistence. Into the midst of this host of enemies, Wellington was about to throw himself with sixty thousand effective men, of whom forty thousand were under his own immediate orders, and twenty thousand under those of Hill : but this force was confident of victory, skilfully led and amply supplied ; possessed of an internal line of communication, enjoying the confidence of the inhabitants, and strengthened by the justice with which its proceedings had been directed.¹

¹ Imperial
Muster
Rolls in
Appendix,
No. I. Nap.
v. 100, 101.
Gurw. ix.
225, 238,
239.

All things being in readiness, Wellington, on the 13th June, **CROSSED THE AGUEDA**, and commenced that campaign which has rendered his name and his country immortal. Four days afterwards he reached Salamanca, and passed the Tormes in four columns by the fords of Santa Martha and Los Cantos ; Marmont retiring as he advanced, after throwing garrisons into the forts of the town, and the castle of Alba de Tormes, which commanded an important passage over the river. Then was seen the profound hatred with which the Peninsular

56.
Advance of
Wellington
to Sala-
manca.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Wellington to Lord Liverpool, June 18, 1812. Gur. ix. 241. Nap. v. 122. Belm. i. 229.

people were animated against their Gallic oppressors, and the vast amount of evil which they had received at their hands. Salamanca instantly became a scene of rejoicing; the houses were illuminated, the people alternately singing and weeping for joy; while the British army passed triumphantly through the shouting crowd, and took a position on the hill of San Christoval, about three miles in advance of the town. It was no wonder such joy was evinced at their deliverance from a bondage which had now endured four years. Independent of innumerable acts of extortion and oppression during their stay, the French had destroyed thirteen out of twenty-five convents, and twenty-two out of twenty-five colleges, in that celebrated seat of learning, the stones of which were built up into three forts, which now, in a military point of view, constituted the strength of the place.¹

57.
Siege of the
forts.
June 17.

San Vincent, named from the large convent which it enclosed, and situated on a perpendicular cliff which overhung the Tormes, was the most important of these strongholds. The two other forts, called Cajetano and La Merced, were also placed on the loftiest of the steep eminences with which this romantic city abounds; and the whole three had bomb-proof buildings, deep ditches, perpendicular scarps and counterscarps, and other defences which could only be reduced by a regular siege. They were accordingly immediately invested, and on the second day after ground had been broken, the heavy guns began to batter in breach; and the artillery ammunition having become scanty from this unexpected resistance, an opening made in the pallisades, considerable injury done to the scarp, and a part of the wall of the convent within fallen, an attempt was made to carry the forts of Cajetano and La Merced by escalade.² The attempt, however, though gallantly conducted by General Bowes,* failed, after one hundred and twenty men had

June 23.
² Wellington to Lord Liverpool, June 25, 1812. Gur. ix. 255. Nap. v. 128, 133. Belm. i. 228, 229.

* This brave man was slightly wounded early in the attack, as he headed

fallen, from the entrance being still blocked up and impassable : and the operations were again unavoidably suspended from want of ammunition ; while the aspect of affairs on the outside of the city seemed to prognosticate an immediate and decisive battle.

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1812.

Marmont took steps to collect his whole army on the Douro, between the 16th and 19th, with the exception of Bonnet's division, which was still in the Asturias, and, having actually concentrated four divisions of infantry, and a brigade of cavalry, moved forward with about twenty-five thousand men. Wellington had taken every imaginable precaution, by directing the Conde d'Amarante to move out of the north of Portugal, Castanos with the army of Galicia to attack Astorga, and all the guerilla chiefs in the north of Spain to harass the enemy's rear, to prevent such an accumulation of force against him. But the French gave themselves very little concern about these desultory efforts, and directed almost their whole force against the English army. Upon the approach of so formidable a body, concentrated in their position on the heights of San Christoval, a great battle was expected in both armies for the following day. The crisis, however, passed over without any event of importance. Marmont, after lying two days close to the British line, during which he was joined by three divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, raising his force to nearly forty thousand men, of whom three thousand two hundred were cavalry, and seventy-two pieces of cannon, deemed them too strongly posted to admit of successful attack, and, decamping on the 23d, made a show of crossing the Tormes and threatening the British line of communication, in the hope that they would in consequence draw

58.
Marmont's
ineffectual
attempt to
raise the
siege.

the troops, and removed to a little distance in the rear to have the wound dressed. The surgeon was in the act of doing so, when the cry arose that the troops were driven back : Bowes, hurt as he was, immediately hastened to the front to rally the men, led them back to the foot of the walls, and was there shot through the heart.—See WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL, 25th June 1812 ; GURWOOD, ix. 255.

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LXVIII.

1812.

June 24.

¹ Gurw. ix.
242, and
254, 255.
Jones, ii.
97, 98. Nap.
v. 129, 131.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
38, 39.
Belm. iv.
439, 447.

back in that quarter, and an opportunity might occur of carrying off the beleaguered garrisons. In this hope, however, he was disappointed; for Wellington stood firm, merely passing a brigade of Bock's German horse across the river to watch his movements. Next day Marmont sent twelve thousand men across the Tormes, and seemed disposed to follow with his whole force: but Bock's steady dragoons retired slowly and in admirable order before them, and two divisions were immediately sent across to restore the balance on the other side; upon discovering which, the enemy desisted from their attempt, repassed the Tormes by the fords of Huerta, and resumed their former position in front of San Christoval.¹ *

59.
Capture of
the forts.
June 27.

While these movements were going forward in the rear of the besiegers, a fresh supply of ammunition was received in the trenches, and the fire of the breaching batteries was renewed in a much more effective manner. On the evening of the 26th, red-hot shot, which had been prepared in the town, were thrown into the forts, which speedily set them on fire; and though the garrisons at first, with great activity, extinguished the flames, yet the bombardment having been continued with much vigour all night, next morning the convent of San Vincent was in a blaze, and the breach of Fort Cajetano so much widened that it was plainly practicable, and the storming party was formed. The white flag was then hoisted from Cajetano, and a parley ensued; but Wellington, deeming this only an artifice to gain time, allowed them only five minutes to make an unconditional surrender, and that period having elapsed without submission being made,² the troops were

² Wellington to Lord
Liverpool,
June 30,
1812. Gur.
ix. 261, 262.
Nap. v. 133,
134. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 39.
Belm. iv.
449, 451.

* The faculty of rapidly withdrawing the mind from one subject and fixing it on another of a different description, is one of the surest marks of the highest class of intellectual powers. Of this a remarkable instance occurred at this period: for Wellington, on the day when he lay at San Christoval, in front of the French army, hourly expecting a battle, wrote out in the field a long and minute memorial on the establishment of a bank at Lisbon on the principles of the English ones.—See WELLINGTON to SIR CHARLES STUART, 25th June 1812; GURWOOD, ix. 249.

ordered to advance to the assault. Very little resistance, however, was made : the conflagration in San Vincent paralysed the garrisons, and the troops got in at breaches more formidable than those of Ciudad Rodrigo with trifling loss. Seven hundred men were made prisoners ; thirty pieces of cannon, and large stores in arms, ammunition, and clothing, fell into the hands of the victors, who, since the commencement of the siege, had sustained in the field and in the trenches a loss of five hundred men.

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1812.

On learning the fall of the forts, Marmont retired, withdrawing the garrison from Alba de Tormes ; the works of which, as well as those of the Salamanca strongholds, were immediately blown up by the British general. It then appeared evident that Wellington had been in error, in not having attacked his adversary when he lay before him at San Christoval ; for he now retreated to the Douro, in order to await the reinforcements from Bonnet in the Asturias and from Caffarelli in Biscay, which were on their march to join him ; and Joseph, with the army of the centre, was also in motion, to fall on the right flank of the invader ; so that an overwhelming force might soon be expected to accumulate around the latter, and compel his retreat. Aware of the succours which were approaching, Marmont withdrew behind the Douro, and strongly occupied the fortified bridges of Zamora, Toro, and Tordesillas, which defended the principal passages of that river. Wellington followed, and reached the southern bank, where preparations were immediately commenced for forcing the passage, and the army waited quietly till the waters, which were subsiding, should have fallen sufficiently to render the fords practicable. The position of the French here, however, guarded by a hundred pieces of cannon, was so exceedingly strong, that but little expectation could be entertained of forcing it in front ; but Wellington had been led to form sanguine hopes that, being entirely destitute of magazines or stores of any kind, so large a body of men would soon consume

60.
Marmont
retires be-
hind the
Douro.

July 2.

July 7.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 7, 1812. Gurw. ix. 275. Jones, ii. 100, 101. Marmont to Berthier, July 1, 1812. Belm. i. 653.

the whole subsistence in their vicinity, and be compelled either to fall back to less wasted districts, or detach so largely in quest of food, as might furnish an opportunity for striking a blow at their centre. In this hope, however, he was disappointed: the skill which long experience had given the French in extorting supplies out of a country, again on this, as on many previous occasions, exceeded what was conceived possible; and on the 7th, Marmont was joined by Bonnet's division from the Asturias, which augmented his force to forty-five thousand men.¹*

61.
Able movements of Marmont, and Wellington's retreat.

It was now Wellington's turn to feel anxious; for not only was the army in his front superior to his own, but Caffarelli, with ten thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, was rapidly approaching, and his own supplies were brought up with great difficulty, by a long line of communication, from the Agueda, which would ere long be threatened by the army of the centre, now fast coming up from Madrid. It soon appeared that the French general, confident in his received and expected reinforcements, was about to assume the offensive; and his measures with this view were taken with great ability. He first moved a considerable body of men towards his own right, as if with the design of crossing the Douro at Toro; this of course induced a parallel movement of Wellington to his left: then, in order still farther to impose upon the enemy, two French divisions actually passed over at that place, and made a show of turning the British left. In the night, however, this movement was suddenly reversed: Marmont countermarched with all his forces; those which had crossed at Toro were quickly withdrawn,

July 15.

July 16.

* "The army of Portugal has now been surrounded for the last six weeks, and scarcely a letter reaches its commander; but the system of organised rapine and plunder, and the extraordinary discipline so long established in the French armies, enable it to subsist at the expense of the total ruin of the country in which it has been placed; and I am not certain that Marshal Marmont has not now at his command a greater quantity of provisions and supplies of every kind than we have from Lisbon."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 21st July 1812; GURWOOD, ii. 298.

and moved up the right bank of the river ; and such was the expedition used, that by morning they were at Tordesillas, twenty-five miles above the former town ! Immediately the river was passed at the latter point, the troops moved on with extraordinary celerity to Nava del Rey, on the left bank ; and before nightfall the whole French army was concentrated in that neighbourhood, some of their divisions having marched forty and even forty-five miles, without a longer halt than for a few hours.¹

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LXVIII.

1812.
July 17.

¹ Belm. i.
131. Jones,
ii. 101, 102.
Nap. v. 136,
146.

This able manœuvre of Marmont's reduced Wellington to great difficulties. It re-established the communication between the army of Portugal and that under Joseph, which was rapidly approaching from the Guadarrama pass, and which, with Caffarelli's reserves, would ere long raise the force under the French general to nearly seventy thousand men, with a hundred and forty guns. In addition to this, the diversions on which the English general had calculated to lighten the load likely to fall on him when he advanced into the centre of Spain, had, from one cause or other, proved entirely illusory. The Spaniards had been besieging Astorga, with twelve thousand men, for above a month ; but although the breach was practicable, their ammunition failing, and the garrison only eleven hundred strong, nothing could persuade them to hazard an assault. Mina had just received a severe defeat, which had seriously paralysed the guerillas in the whole northern provinces ; and the accounts from Cadiz were most discouraging. Soult's bombardment had at last struck a great panic into the citizens of that luxurious city, which had hitherto felt only the excitement and suffered none of the horrors of war ; the British mediation in the affair of the revolted colonies had failed, under circumstances which left no room to doubt that their influence with the Cortes was on the wane ; and it was already suspected, what has since been ascertained by authentic evidence, that many members of that body had opened secret negotiations with Joseph ;² and that, if he would recognise the

^{62.}
Wellington's difficulties from the slowness of the Spaniards.

July 4.

² Nap. v.
143, 146.
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 14,
1812. Gurw.
ix. 284, 289.
Belm. i. 231.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

democratic constitution, they were prepared to acknowledge his authority, and admit the French troops within the walls of Cadiz.

63.
Failure of
Lord W.
Bentinck in
his projected
co-operation.

But, disquieting as these accounts were, they were neither the only nor the greatest of Wellington's mortifications at this critical juncture. It had been arranged with him, and directed by government, that Lord William Bentinck, who commanded in Sicily, should, at the same time that he himself invaded Spain from the westward, menace it from the east, where Alicante and Carthagenæ still offered a secure basis for offensive operations. Wellington had relied much on the effect of this diversion; and although, if earlier undertaken, it might have been attended with still greater results, by arresting the storming of Tarragona, and preventing the siege of Valencia, yet still, at the eleventh hour, it promised, if ably conducted, to be followed by the most important consequences. He anticipated from it the recovery of one, perhaps both, of these fortresses; and expected that Joseph and the army of the centre, distracted by the pressing necessity of succouring Suchet and the eastern provinces, would be unable to detach any considerable forces to the army of Portugal, or interfere with his operations in Leon and Castile. It may readily be conceived, therefore, what was the disappointment of the English general, when he received intelligence, as he lay fronting Marmont on the Douro, that Lord William Bentinck, instead of following out the concerted and directed plan of operations on the east of Spain, had been seduced into a hazardous and eccentric expedition to the coast of Italy, where no effective co-operation could be expected from the unwarlike inhabitants, and immediate success, even if attained, could terminate only in ultimate disaster. Owing to this unhappy change, the whole army of the centre was disposable against him. And greater still was the immediate embarrassment produced by discovering that, at the very time when he was beyond all example straitened for

money, in consequence of the unparalleled absorption of specie in the Russian expedition, and consequent impossibility of purchasing it, save at an enormous premium, in the south of Europe, no less than four millions of dollars, which his agents might otherwise have got at Gibraltar and Minorca, had been swept away by those of Lord William for the charges of this tempting but Quixotic enterprise.¹ *

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¹Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 14, 1812. Gurw. ix. 287, 289, and 290.

These considerations, and above all the near approach of the army of the centre with fourteen thousand men, made Wellington feel the necessity of a retreat. In the commencement of this retrograde movement, however, the British right wing was exposed to considerable danger, from which it was only saved by the admirable firmness of the troops engaged. Marmont brought the greater part of his forces to bear on the fourth and light divisions, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, which were then posted on the Trabancos, and which, during the night of the 17th, were, from the vast accumulation of the enemy in their front, in great danger. At daybreak on the 18th, the French troops commenced the attack; but Cotton with his two divisions contrived to maintain his position till the cavalry of Bock, Le Marchant, and Alten, which Wellington immediately brought up in person, came to their support.² The whole then retired in admirable order through Castrejon, and towards the Guarena, till they effected their junction with the main body

64.
Wellington retreats across the Guarena.

June 18.

² Gurw. ix. 295, 296. Viet. et Conq. xxi. 41. Nap. v. 151.

* "I have a letter from Lord W. Bentinck of the 9th June. He had sent the first division of the expedition to Minorca, and the second was about to go to Sardinia; but neither of them for the operations concerted on the eastern coast of the Peninsula. He has determined in lieu thereof to try his fortune in Italy, with fifteen thousand instead of six thousand, which he was to send into Spain. I hope he will succeed, but I doubt it: there is no solid foundation for his plan; he has not even fixed the degrees of latitude for his operations, much less the place of his landing."—WELLINGTON to GENERAL CLINTON, 16th July 1812; GURWOOD, ix. 293.

"Lord William's decision is fatal to the campaign, at least at present. If he should land anywhere in Italy, he will as usual be obliged to re-embark; and we shall have lost a golden opportunity here."—WELLINGTON to SIR H. WELLESLEY, 15th July 1812; *Ibid.* ix. 287.

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of the army, which was now concentrated on that stream.

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65.

Beautiful
spectacle
which oc-
curred dur-
ing the
retreat.

The spectacle which ensued during this retreat was one of the most beautiful which ever occurred in modern war. The air was sultry; the country open like the Downs in England; the troops, arrayed on either side in dense masses, marched close together, so near, indeed, that the officers in courtesy lowered their swords or touched their caps to each other; while the intervening space, hardly half musket-shot across, was filled with the German cavalry, who seemed stationed there to prevent a collision of the infantry till the proper season arrived. Forty French guns were collected on the high grounds on the French side of the river; and it was under the fire from these that Cotton's two divisions, who were joined during the retreat by the fifth division, crossed the stream, after the two hostile bodies had marched for ten miles in this extraordinary state of close proximity. Nevertheless, such was the thirst of the men from the excessive heat, that the fourth division stopped for a few moments, in the midst of the cannonade, as they forded the water, to drink. The light division, whom long practice had rendered expert in all the arts of war, sipped the cool wave in their hands without halting.¹

¹Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 21,
1812. *Gurw.*
ix. 295, 296.
Jones, ii.
102, 103.
Nap. v. 151,
153. *Vict.*
et Conq.
xxi. 41, 42.

Emboldened by this retreat, Marmont now moved the cavalry of his right wing, under Carier, across the Guarena at Castrillo, and began to push a column forward in order

"War cannot be carried on without money: we are to find money as we can, at the most economical rate of exchange; and then comes Lord William to Gibraltar, and carries off four millions of dollars, giving a shilling for each more than we can give; and after all he sends his troops upon some scheme to the coast of Italy, and not to the eastern coast of the Peninsula, as ordered by government and arranged with me." — WELLINGTON to SIR CHARLES STUART, 15th July 1812; *Ibid.* 289.

Lord W. Bentinck was a most amiable man, and possessed many valuable qualities; but they were suited rather to pacific administration than warlike combinations, as his subsequent government in India evinced; and he was strongly tinged with those speculative views in regard to the regeneration of society then so prevalent, and which have since so generally terminated in disappointment both in the Old and New World.

to gain possession of an important ridge which lay above that town, at the junction of the Guarena with the little stream of the Canizal. Wellington, however, had expected this movement; and just as the French were entering the valley, they were met by Alten's dragoons, and stopped by the successive charges of these gallant cavaliers. More cavalry, however, advanced to the support of the French, upon which Wellington ordered the 27th and 40th regiments, under Colonel Stubbs, to attack the flank of their foot, while the 3d dragoons came up to their support. These movements were entirely successful. The infantry came down the hill with an impetuous charge of the bayonet on the enemy's foot; and Alten's men being thus relieved, turned fiercely on their horse, who speedily gave way, and were driven back with the loss of one cannon, two hundred and forty prisoners, among whom was General Carier himself, and three hundred killed and wounded. The troops on both sides were highly excited by this action and their close proximity to each other, and a general battle was universally and eagerly expected; but the day passed over without any further event. Neither general was prepared for the combat. Marmont's men were worn out with two days and a half of incessant and rapid marching; and Wellington felt too strongly the great superiority of the enemy's artillery, which was nearly double his own, to choose to hazard a battle, unless an occasion should offer of giving it with advantage.¹

The fatigues of both armies, and the extraordinary heat of the weather, which now glowed with all the ardour of the dog-days, prevented either host from moving on the following day till four in the afternoon, when Marmont took the initiative, and, drawing back his right, advanced his left, and moved his whole force up the course of the Guarena, which there runs nearly due north, along the ridge of high downs which form the right bank of that stream. The English general moved in a

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66.

Repulse of
a cavalry
attack at
Castrillo.

¹Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 26,
1812. Gurw.
ix. 296, 297.
Nap. v. 154,
155. Vict.
et Conq.
xxi. 41, 42.

67.

Movements
on both sides
during the
retreat to
San Chris-
toval.
July 19.

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July 20.

parallel line along the heights on the left bank, and crossing the upper Guarena at Vallesa and El Olmo, took post for the night on the high table-land of Vallesa, where every preparation was made for a battle on the succeeding day. Marmont, however, instead of fighting there, continued his movement on the succeeding morning by his left; and, passing the English position, crossed the Guarena near Santa la Piedra, and, pressing rapidly forward, soon gained the immense plateau which stretches thence to the neighbourhood of SALAMANCA. Wellington followed in a parallel line on a corresponding ridge of heights on his side, and the imposing spectacle of the 18th was again repeated, but on a much grander scale; for the whole of both armies were now massed together, and they marched on parallel heights within musket-shot of each other, and in the most perfect array. The horse-artillery and cavalry on either side hovered round the moving hosts, ready to take advantage of the slightest disorder that might ensue, or dash into the first chasm that appeared. Not a rank was broken, however, nor an opening left in either of these noble armies. As one man, five-and-forty thousand upon either side moved on, while not a straggler or a carriage was left behind them on their track; and but for a few cannon-shot which occasionally interrupted the impressive stillness of the scene, it might have been supposed that they were allied troops executing evolutions on a magnificent scale on a chosen field-day. Towards evening, however, it became manifest that the British were outflanked, and that they could not overtake the enemy so as to prevent their junction with the army of the centre; and Wellington therefore abandoned the parallel march, and, falling back towards Salamanca, encamped for the night on the heights of Caboza Velloso; while the sixth division and Alten's cavalry, by a forced march, reached and secured the important position of San Christoval in front of that city.¹

¹Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 21, 1812. *Gurw.* ix. 297. *Vict. et Conq.* xxi. 42, 43. *Nap.* v. 158, 159. *Jones*, ii. 103, 104.

The manœuvres of these interesting days had turned entirely to the advantage of the French marshal. Not only had he succeeded in assuming the initiative and taking the lead in operation, a matter always of the highest importance in war, but he had outflanked his opponent, and, by his indefatigable activity, changed his position from his front to his right flank, and interposed between the English army and the great road to Madrid. Nothing now could prevent Marmont from effecting his junction with the army of the centre, which was within a few days' march ; and the English general, greatly outnumbered, would then have no alternative but a retreat to the Portuguese frontier. Severely mortified at this untoward result, but still resolved not to hazard the fate of the war on an action, unless its chances appeared to be favourable, Wellington on the 21st drew back his whole army to its old ground on the heights of San Christoval ; while Marmont followed with his forces, and extended his left wing and centre across the Tormes, so as to seize the road from Salamanca to Ciudad Rodrigo, and threaten the British communications. To counteract this, Wellington made a corresponding flank movement by the bridge and fords of Salamanca, and halted for the night on the heights near the left bank, still covering the city, and re-establishing his communications with Ciudad Rodrigo ; and on the following morning the army was drawn out in position on that ground, extending from two bold rocky heights, called the Arapeiles, to the Tormes, below the fords of Santa Marta.¹

The situation of the British general was now very critical ; for not only was the army of the centre, fourteen thousand strong, rapidly approaching, but intelligence arrived in the night that Chauvel, with the cavalry and artillery of the army of the north, had arrived so close in the rear of the French, that that additional force also would reinforce Marmont on the following day. Nothing could prevent the junction of these formidable additions

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68.

The British
retreat to
the neigh-
bourhood of
Salamanca.

July 21.

July 22.

1 Jones, ii.

104, 105.

Wellington

to Lord

Bathurst,

July 24,

1812.

Gurw. ix.

301. Nap.

v. 160, 161.

69.

Critical
situation of
the English
army.

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with the French army ; and it was obviously, therefore, the policy of its general to remain on the defensive, and shun a general engagement till they had arrived. But in this decisive moment the star of England prevailed. Marmont was aware that he would be superseded in his command by the arrival of Joseph or of Jourdan, the senior marshal in Spain : the retreat of Wellington, and his declining to attack when formerly in position at San Christoval, had inspired the French general with a mistaken idea of his character ; and he now openly aspired to the glory, before his reinforcements came up, of forcing the English army to evacuate Salamanca, or possibly gaining a decisive victory, and snatching from the brows of its general the laurels of Busaco and Torres Vedras. Influenced by these feelings, the French marshal displayed an extraordinary degree of activity at this crisis. He drew the remainder of his troops over to the left bank of the Tormes, and, observing that the two rocky heights of the Arapeiles were unoccupied on the British right, he pushed at noon a body of infantry out of the wood, where the principal part of his army was concealed, who stole unperceived round the more distant of them, and gained possession of it. This success rendered Wellington's position very critical ; for Marmont immediately crowned the height he had won with heavy artillery, which commanded the only line by which the British army could have retreated in case of disaster : while the French, encouraged by the result of their first attempt, made a dash at the second height ; but here they were anticipated by the British, who gained the hill and kept it.¹

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 23, 1812. Gurw. ix. 302, 303. Nap. v. 162, 163. Vict. et Cong. xxi. 44.

70.

Movements of both armies immediately before the battle.

The acquisition of the more distant Arapeiles by the enemy, rendered necessary a change of position on Wellington's part. The first and light divisions, accordingly, were brought up to front the enemy's troops on the right, and the whole army changed its front ; what was lately the right became the left, while the new right was pushed

as far as Aldea Tejada, on the Ciudad Rodrigo road ; and a division left on the other side of the Tormes was recalled. The commissariat and baggage waggons also were ordered to the rear, and the dust of their trains was already visible to both armies on the highway to that fortress. This circumstance, joined to the British troops being only here and there visible, where the hollows of the ground opened a vista of part of their array, led Marmont to suppose that a general retreat to Ciudad Rodrigo was in preparation : and in fact he was not far wrong in his guess ; for there can be no doubt but in that, or at latest the following night, this retrograde movement would have been undertaken. Fearing that they would get out of reach before his forces were fully concentrated, at two o'clock in the afternoon he took his resolution. Thomière's division, covered by fifty guns, which commenced a furious cannonade on the British columns within their reach, was pushed to the extreme left, to menace the Ciudad Rodrigo road : he was followed by Clausel and Bonnet ; while the march of all the French divisions towards the centre was hastened, in order, with the remainder of the army, comprising four divisions, to fall on the flank of the British as they defiled past the French Arapeiles.¹

Thomière's division, which headed the hostile array, reached the Peak of Miranda, while a French regiment won the village of Arapeiles, by which it was intended the main body of their army should fall perpendicularly on the British ; but they were speedily driven from the greater part of it again, and a fierce struggle was going forward. Meanwhile Thomière's division, followed by Clausel's, exactly like that of the Russian centre in performing a similar flank movement in presence of the enemy at Austerlitz,² advanced too rapidly, and a chasm, at first small but rapidly increasing, appeared between their divisions and that of Bonnet, which succeeded them and formed the nearest part of the centre. Wellington

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¹Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 23,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
302. Nap.
v. 164, 166.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
44, 45.
Belm. i.
232, 233.

71.
False move-
ment of the
French left.

² *Ante*, ch.
xi. § 129.

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1812.

¹ Gurw. ix.
303. Nap.
v. 166, 167.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
46. Belm.
i. 231.
Jackson's
Life of Wel-
lington, ii.
221.

had descended from the English Arapeiles when intelligence of this false movement was brought him : instantly he returned to the height, and with a glass surveyed, shortly but with close attention, their left wing, now entirely separated from the centre. Immediately his resolution was taken : "At last I have them !" was his emphatic exclamation, as he took the glass from his eye : orders were sent out to the commanders of divisions with extraordinary celerity ; and turning to the Spanish general Alava, who stood by his side, he caught him by the arm and said, "Mon cher Alava, Marmont est perdu !" ¹ *

72.

Wellington's
dispositions
of attack.

So rapid were the movements, so instantaneous the onset of the British, that it seemed as if the spirit of a mighty wizard had suddenly transfused itself into the whole host. Independent of the imprudent extension of their left, Wellington had the advantage of his opponents in another particular ; for his line formed the chord, while they were toiling round the arc, and consequently his dispositions were made with much greater celerity, and his troops in a much more concentrated position than theirs could be. Instant use was made of this advantage. The first and light divisions, under Generals Campbell and Alten, and forming the left of the army, were placed in reserve behind the Arapeiles hill ; the fifth division, under General Leith, was moved from the left to the centre, which now consisted of that division, the fourth, under Cole, and Bradford's Portuguese, flanked on the right by the heavy cavalry ; the sixth and seventh, under Clinton and Hope, and Anson's light cavalry, were in reserve immediately behind them ; the third division, under Pakenham, supported by d'Urban's cavalry, formed the extreme right of the army ; while the first and light divisions, and Pack's Portuguese, all on the highest ground, were disposed in broad masses as a reserve. ² When this

² Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 23,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
303. Nap.
v. 167, 168.
Jones, ii.
106. Jom.
iv. 234.

* "My dear Alava, Marmont is lost !"

disposition was completed, the army formed a line in *échelon*, with the right in front. The attack was to be made first in that quarter; the onset was to fall on the French disunited, scattered, and partly in march; and Wellington, like Frederick at Leuthen and Rosbach, and Napoleon at Austerlitz,* was to give another example of the wonderful effects of the oblique mode of attack, when applied by a skilful general, and falling on an unwary adversary.

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Marmont's object in the early part of the day had been to assume a good defensive position; but at two in the afternoon this design was exchanged for that of a vigorous offensive if a favourable opportunity should occur; and it was in order to facilitate this object that Thomière's division had been sent to occupy the high ground on the extreme left, which has already been mentioned. No sooner did he observe the concentration of troops on the British right, than he ordered Clausel and Bonnet, with their respective divisions, to move to his support, and they were in the act of doing so when the tempest fell upon them. Thus, when the British line, in close order and admirable array, assailed the French, Thomière's division on their extreme left was two leagues from their centre, and Clausel and Bonnet imperfectly filled up the gap, being themselves separated by a distinct interval both from the one and the other. In vain Marmont, who from the summit of the French Arapeiles discovered the danger, strove to guard against it, and despatched orders to his left to close in again to the centre, and to the centre divisions to hasten to the left: before his orders could reach those distant columns, the British bayonets were upon them.¹

73.
French dis-
positions,
and com-
mencement
of the
battle.

¹ Marmont to Joseph, July 25, 1812. Belm. i. 664. Pièces Just. Vict. et Cong. xxi. 47, 48.

The dark mass of troops which occupied the English

* "Imitating the example of Frederick at Rosbach, or rather my own at Austerlitz, he allowed the separation of our left to be decidedly pronounced, and then commenced the attack on the height of the Arapeiles by Beresford, and by an oblique march threw the weight of his force on the extreme left, which threatened to turn him."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 23.

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74.

Progress of
the battle,
and wound
of Marmont.

Arapeiles, "rushing," as an eyewitness relates, "violently down the interior slope of the mountain, entered the valley between them and the enemy amidst a storm of bullets which seemed to shear away the very surface of the earth over which the soldiers moved." Tranquil on the summit of the French Arapeiles, Marmont trusted that this terrible tempest would arrest the attack of the British infantry; nor was he disquieted even by their gallant advance in the midst of it, till he beheld Pakenham's division and d'Urban's cavalry move at right angles directly across Thomière's line of march, at the foot of the Peak of Miranda, while other broad masses of crimson uniforms were marching against him in front. Aware at once of the danger, he was hurrying in person towards the spot, when the accidental explosion of a shell from a distant British battery stretched him on the plain, with a broken arm and severe wound in the side. His fall, however, probably made little difference on the issue of the battle; for its fate was already decided by the scattered position of the French divisions and the suddenness of the British attack.¹

¹ Belm. i.
232, 233.
Marmont to
Joseph, July
25, 1812.
Ibid. 664.
Nap. v. 171.

75.

Total de-
feat of the
French left
under Tho-
mière.

It was just five o'clock when Pakenham fell on Thomière, who, so far from being prepared for such an onset, had just reached an open hill, the last of the ridge over which his division had extended, from whence he expected to see the Allied army in full retreat to Ciudad Rodrigo, and, closely pursued by Marmont, defiling in the valley before him. To effect a change of front in such circumstances was impossible; all that could be done was to resist as they stood. The British columns formed into line as they marched; so that, the moment they came in sight of the enemy, they were ready to charge. In an instant the French gunners were at their pieces; and a crowd of light troops hurried to the front, and endeavoured by a rapid fire to cover the formation of the troops behind. Vain attempt! Right onward through the storm of bullets did the British line, led by the

heroic Pakenham, advance ; the light troops were dispersed before them like chaff before the wind ; the half-formed lines were broken into fragments ; d'Urban's Portuguese cavalry, supported by Harvey's English dragoons, turned their left flank, scrambled up the steep sides of a bush-fringed stream which flowed behind the ridge, and got into their rear ; while their right was already menaced by Leith with the fifth division. Encompassed in this manner with enemies, Thomière's division was forced backward along the ridge ; yet they retired not at first in confusion, but skilfully, like gallant veterans, seizing every successive wood and hill which offered the means of arresting the enemy. Gradually, however, the reflux and pressing together of so large a body by enemies at once in front and on flank, threw their array into confusion : their cavalry were routed and driven among the foot ; Thomière himself was killed while striving to arrest the torrent ; the Allied cavalry broke in like a flood into the openings of the infantry ; and the whole division was thrown back, utterly routed, with the loss of three thousand prisoners, on Clausel's, which was hurrying up to its aid from the forest.¹

Nearly at the same time that this splendid success was gained on the extreme British right, Cole and Leith, with their respective divisions, moved forward at a rapid pace against the part of the enemy's left composed of Clausel's division, which was hastily formed to oppose them,—flanked by le Marchant's heavy dragoons and Anson's light cavalry, all led by Sir Stapleton Cotton. While the French were warmly engaged with the infantry, who were gaining ground on them, in front, a cloud of dust suddenly filled an opening in the line between them and Pakenham : a loud trampling was heard, and out of it suddenly burst a glittering band of helmets, which at full speed came thundering down on their already shaken and bewildered lines. Hardly any resistance was attempted ; whole companies threw down their arms and

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¹ Nap. v.
170, 171.
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
July 23,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
303. Jones,
ii. 137.
Belm. i.
233. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 47, 48.
Beamish,
ii. 74, 75.

76.
Splendid
charge of
the British
cavalry on
Clausel's
division.

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1812.

¹ Gurw. ix.
304. Nap.
v. 172, 173.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
47. Jones,
ii. 108.

fled; the long swords of the British dragoons gleamed aloft as they passed shouting through the broken crowd; five guns were taken by Lord Edward Somerset with a single squadron; two thousand prisoners were made in a few minutes; and the whole French left, utterly broken and disordered, was thrown back into the wood in its rear, and, in a military point of view, annihilated. Great as this success was, it was dearly purchased by the death of the brave le Marchant, who fell in the moment of victory, while carrying the standards of England triumphantly through the ranks of France.¹*

Meanwhile a bloody and more doubtful contest was going on in the centre, where Pack's Portuguese advanced against the French Arapeiles, and the fourth and fifth

* John Gaspard le Marchant, called Gaspard after the great Admiral Coligni, a collateral ancestor, was born at Guernsey, in the year 1767. He was born of an ancient and highly respectable family, which had long held magisterial offices in the island, and borne arms in the service of Great Britain. He received the rudiments of his education at Dr Morgan's school at Bath, where he was chiefly known by a stand-up fight with a boy of much superior strength, the terror of the school, afterwards Sir Sidney Smith. On leaving school he applied closely to study; but his passion for a military life being clearly evinced, he was placed at sixteen in the York Militia, from whence at eighteen he was transferred to the Royals, then quartered in Dublin. There his commanding figure, fearless courage, and gentlemanlike manners, soon introduced him into the best society, and led to an acquaintance, which soon ripened into intimate friendship, with the Marquis of Buckingham, then Lord-lieutenant. In 1784, when at Gibraltar, he lost £200 in gambling; and, being fearful of disclosing a debt of such a nature to his father, he borrowed the sum from the paymaster, and gave proof of the strength of his character by resolutely withdrawing for three years from the mess, till the whole was repaid. In 1787 he purchased a cornetcy in the Enniskillen Dragoons. His conduct in that regiment was so exemplary, that it soon led to his being given the command of the guard of honour which escorted the King to Weymouth. This led to an introduction to the royal circle: his drawings on the coast of Barbary, which were very beautiful, were much admired; his elegant manners attracted general notice; and he soon became such a favourite that, by the express desire of the King, he was promoted to a lieutenancy in the Bays, in which he soon after acquired a troop. He was soon after married to Miss Carey, a young lady of equal beauty and worth, in Guernsey, to whom he had been long attached. In 1793 he landed, with the expedition under Lord Moira, at Ostend, and soon after behaved with such gallantry in a successful charge against the French camp at Cassel, garrisoned by thirty thousand men, that he was specially thanked in the public orders by Count Hohenzollern, who commanded the Allies. He bore an active and distinguished part in the campaigns of 1793 and 1794; and having returned to England on the withdrawal of the Allies from Flanders, his regiment was

divisions, headed by Leith and Cole, after clearing the village of Arapeiles, had driven Bonnet's troops backwards, step by step, and with hard fighting, upon the broken remains of Clausel's and Thomière's divisions. As soon as the combatants had passed the village of the French Arapeiles, the rock was assailed; but everywhere the most vigorous resistance was experienced. Pack's men gallantly ascended the rugged height; already they were within thirty yards of the summit, driving the enemy's skirmishers before them, when a loud shout arose, and the French masses, hitherto concealed, leaped out from among the rocks on their front and flank, and suddenly closed with their adversaries.* The struggle was only of a few moments' duration; a stream of fire, followed

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77.

Repulse of
the British
in the centre,
and at the French
Arapeiles.

again stationed at Weymouth, where he composed a "Code of Instructions for the Sword Exercise," which was soon adopted by the Duke of York, and forms a permanent part of the regulations of the army. This led to his turning his attention to the swords worn by the cavalry, and the pattern he selected was soon adopted by the army, and continues to be used to the present day. In 1797 he published a new edition of his work on the cavalry exercise, which has since gone through five large impressions. Soon after, he prepared a work on military education, which was submitted to, and highly approved by, the Duke of York, and led to many interviews with that prince, which terminated in the establishment of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, of which he was appointed lieutenant-governor. Great difficulties were experienced in the early period of this establishment, which his temper, perseverance, and industry were mainly instrumental in overcoming. In 1811 he was promoted to the rank of major-general, and soon after removed from his important duties at the Military College to the more arduous charge of commanding a brigade in the field. He was there actively engaged till his career was terminated by a glorious death at Salamanca. It is remarkable that Guernsey has given birth to two of the most distinguished heroes in the land and sea services, General le Marchant and Sir James Saumarez.—See a very interesting Memoir, printed for private circulation, of General le Marchant, by his son Sir Denis le Marchant, to whose kindness the author is indebted for a copy of that rare and interesting work.

* " His virtus ferrumque locum promittit; at illis
Ipse locus. Miles rupes oneratus in altas
Nititur: adversoque acies in monte supina
Hæret; et, in tergum casura, umbone sequentis
Erigitur. Nulli telum vibrare vacabat.
Dum labat, et fixo firmat vestigia pilo,
Dum scopulos, stirpesque tenent, atque, hoste relicto,
Cædunt ense viam."

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by a thick cloud of smoke, burst forth like a volcano on the summit of the hill, and immediately the Portuguese were seen flying in disorder, closely followed by the French, to the bottom. This check was attended with still more serious consequences ; for the fourth division, which by this time had got abreast of the French Arapeiles, still driving Bonnet's troops before them, was suddenly assailed in flank by three battalions and some horse, who had descended from the hill or stolen round its shelter, in all the pride of victory ; while, at the same time, twelve hundred fresh adversaries, starting up on the reverse side of the slope which they had so painfully won, poured in a volley in front. Notwithstanding all their gallantry, the fourth division was unable to withstand this double attack ; the men staggered ; Cole and Leith were both wounded : and at length, finding their rear menaced by some of Maucunne's battalions, now disengaged by the repulse at the Arapeiles, they broke and fled in disorder down the ascent.¹

¹Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 23, 1812. Gurw. ix. 304. Nap. v. 174, 175. Kausler, 864, 865.

78.

Wellington and Beresford restore the battle in the centre.

These important advantages in the centre were immediately followed up with uncommon vigour by the French generals. Bonnet was wounded ; but Clausel took the command, and, by his able dispositions, wellnigh restored the battle. Ferey's troops vigorously assailed the front of the fourth division, and pursued them into the hollow behind : Brennier did the same to the fifth, and that gallant body being uncovered on the left, where the fourth division had stood, was overlapped and lost ground ; while a body of cavalry, which had been concealed behind the Arapeiles, issued forth and fiercely assailed even Clinton's reserve division in the centre in flank. The crisis of the battle had arrived : everything depended on the immediate bringing up of reserves to the centre, where the decisive blows were to be struck. Beresford, who happened to be at hand, was the first who arrested the disorder. With great presence of mind, he brought up a brigade of the fifth division, and caused it to

change its formation and face outwards, so as to show a front to the troops of the enemy who had issued from the hollows behind the Arapeiles. This movement checked the incursion in that quarter; and Beresford had the satisfaction of perceiving the danger abated before he received a wound which compelled him to leave the field. Meanwhile Wellington, who, throughout the whole day, was to be seen in every part of the action where danger required his presence, hastened to the spot, and immediately ordered up Clinton's division from the rear; and their charge upon the enemy, already somewhat disordered by success, proved entirely successful. The men of Halse's brigade, which formed the left of that division, and consequently was most exposed, were swept away by hundreds; they never for an instant, however, flinched, but, marching steadily forward with the 11th and 61st regiments in the van, regained all the ground which had been lost. An impetuous charge of the French dragoons only for an instant arrested the 53d; the southern ridge, which had been lost, was regained; Ferey was mortally, Clausel slightly, wounded; over the whole centre the steady courage of the Allies prevailed; and "the Allied host, righting itself like a gallant ship after a sudden gust, again bore onwards in blood and gloom; for though the air, purified by the storm of the evening before, was peculiarly clear, one vast cloud of smoke and dust rolled along the basin, and within it was the battle, with all its sights and sounds of terror."¹

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¹ Nap. v.
175, 177.
Gurw. ix.
304, 305.
Jones, ii.
107, 108.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
47, 48.
Kausler.
864, 865.

Notwithstanding the failure of his efforts to change the fate of the day in the centre, Clausel skilfully bore up against the torrent, and manfully strove to collect such a body of troops as might make head against the victors, and prevent the defeat, now inevitable, from being converted into total ruin. Foy's division, which formed the extreme right of the French, was now coming into action, and the balls from his pieces already fell in the British ranks; the broken remains of the left were blended with

79.
Last stand
and final de-
feat of the
French.

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the centre, and both, retiring together towards the right, soon formed a compact body, which took post on the heights behind the Ariba streamlet, and presented a regular line in front of the forest, to cover the retreat of the reserve parks and artillery, and flight of the fugitives, who were hurrying in disorder through its lanes towards Alba de Tormes. Wellington immediately took measures to drive this strong rearguard from its ground, and complete the victory. The first and light divisions, with part of the fourth, which was re-formed, were directed to turn their right; while Clinton's and Pakenham's divisions, with Hope's and the Spaniards in reserve, assailed their front. The French, who were in hopes the British army had exhausted itself in the affray, were astonished to see a new host rise, as if out of the earth, at its close; but nevertheless they made a gallant defence. Foy's light troops and guns, with admirable skill, took advantage of every knoll and thicket, to arrest the pursuers; and the marshy stream which ran from the wood down to the Tormes, and washed the foot of this last defensible ridge, was obstinately contested. Nevertheless, the British, animated by their success, pressed incessantly on; the stream was forced; and, on the right, Clinton and Pakenham mounted the ridge, on the top of which the last French rearguard, composed of Maucunne's division, was stationed. Aided by a brigade of the fourth division, these noble troops ascended the steep just as darkness set in: the flames vomited from the artillery on its summit, and the sparkling line of musketry along its crest, guided their steps; the chasms in their ranks showed how severely they suffered from the fire. But when they reached the summit, Maucunne's task was fulfilled: the dazzling line of light disappeared, the forest had engulfed the foe, and the victors stood alone on the sable hill.¹*

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 23, 1812. Gurw. ix. 304, 305. Vict. ct. Cong. xxi. 47, 48. Nap. v. 177, 179. Jones, ii. 108, 109. Kausler, 865.

* "Ma fuori uscì la notte, e 'l mondo ascese
Sotto il caliginoso orror dell' ali,
E l' ombre sue pacifiche interpose
Fra tante ire de' miseri mortali."—*Gerus. Lib.*, xi. 82.

While the last flames of this terrible conflagration were thus expiring on the ridge of Ariba, Wellington, marching in person with the leading regiment of the light division, was making direct across the fields for Huerta and the fords of the Tormes, by which the enemy had passed on their advance, in the hope that the fugitives would push for the same passage, as the castle of Alba de Tormes, which commanded the only other way of getting across the river, was in the hands of the Spaniards on the preceding morning, and the French were in no plight to have forced the passage. That fort, however, now become of vital importance to the beaten army, had been evacuated during the previous day by the Spanish colonel who held it, and his commander, Don Carlos d'Espana, had not even informed Wellington of the fact. Thus the pursuit of the light division was turned in the wrong direction; and the French, who were well aware that the passage in their rear was open, all took that direction, and reached Alba de Tormes without further molestation. This circumstance, joined to the darkness setting in just as their last rearguard was driven from its ground, alone saved the French army from total destruction; for if either daylight had lasted two hours longer, or Alba de Tormes had been held by the Spaniards, two-thirds of their number and their whole artillery must, from Wellington having reached the fords first, have been captured.¹

The battle of Salamanca, however, such as it was, undoubtedly was one of the greatest blows struck by any nation during the whole revolutionary war. The loss on the part of the Allies was five thousand two hundred men, of whom three thousand one hundred and seventy-six were British, two thousand and eighteen Portuguese, and only eight Spanish—a fair index, probably, to the proportions in which the weight of the contest had fallen on the three nations. The French loss has never been divulged; but if the victors lost above five thousand in

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80.

Wellington
pursues in
the wrong
direction.

¹ Nap. v.
179, 181.
Gurw. ix.
305. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 48.
Marmont
to Joseph,
July 24,
1812.
Belm. i.
No. 103,
and 104.
Appendix,
p. 666.

81.
Results of
the battle.

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killed and wounded, it may be presumed that the vanquished in so decisive an overthrow would have to lament at least seven thousand fallen or disabled in the fight; and, in addition to this, the victors took one hundred and thirty-four officers and seven thousand private soldiers prisoners, besides two eagles, six standards, and eleven cannon, wrested from them in fair fight. The French loss, therefore, may fairly be taken at fourteen thousand men. But this result does not rest on approximation or conjecture; for there exists decisive evidence, on the best of all authorities—that of General Clausel himself—that, three weeks after the battle, he could only collect twenty-two thousand men on the Douro to make head against the English army,* although it was proved, by intercepted returns immediately before it, that Marmont's strength had been forty-four thousand actually with the eagles, independent of six thousand two hundred in the Asturias, and the garrisons lost in the forts.† The French, therefore, during the action and retreat, must

* "I have reached the Douro with the whole army. The difficulty of finding subsistence for the troops is almost insurmountable; all the inhabitants have taken to flight, and the numerous bands of guerillas remove by force such as would remain. Thus the cultivator, if he escape assassination from our soldiers, is sure to be punished, imprisoned, or carried off by the guerillas, if he remains in the neighbourhood of the French army. The consequence is, that the army is obliged to seek its provisions in presence of the enemy, and it is always in want of everything. Our position in the middle of Castile is exactly what it was in Portugal, which was the cause of our ruin. I have taken the most vigorous measures to arrest the disorders; more than fifty soldiers have been seized by the provost-marshal, and executed; the officers see that they will be punished also if they do not arrest the disorders they have tolerated, which have produced an abominable spirit in the army. *The army consists of twenty thousand infantry, eighteen hundred horse, and fifty guns.* I hope that four or five thousand marauders, who have followed the convoys to Burgos and Vitoria, murdering and pillaging the whole way, will yet rejoin their colours."—CLAUSEL to DUKE DE FELTRE, Minister-at-War, *Valladolid*, 18th August 1812; BELMAS, i. 673.

† "From the enclosed intercepted returns, the army of Portugal consisted, on the 1st of April, of 65,597 men, of whom 51,492 are effective, fit for duty: of these 43,396 are infantry, 3204 cavalry, and 3393 artillery. There are, besides, 1500 infantry and 1000 horse at Salamanca; which, including 6200 under Bonnet in the Asturias, will give 43,800 infantry and 4000 cavalry in the field, with 98 guns."—WELLINGTON to SIR J. GRAHAM, 14th June 1812; GURWOOD, ix. 238.

have been weakened to the extent of twenty-two thousand, or half their army; a result which, how great soever, is easily accounted for, if the magnitude of the defeat, and subsequent losses, and the absolute necessity to which the French soldiers were reduced of straggling in quest of subsistence, from no magazines being provided by their generals, is taken into consideration. On the French side, Generals Ferey, Thomière, and Desgravières, were killed; Marshal Marmont, and Generals Bonnet, Clausel, and Monnot were wounded. The Allies had to lament the loss of General le Marchant killed, and Generals Beresford, Stapleton Cotton, Leith, Cole, and Alten wounded. Wellington himself was struck by a spent ball in the thigh; but, like Napoleon and Julius Cæsar, he bore a charmed life, and it did him no serious injury.¹

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¹Wellington to Lord Bathurst, July 23, 1812. Gurw. ix. 305, 309. Jones, ii. 109. Kausler, 865. Nap. 180. Vict. et Conq. xxi. 48.

With admirable diligence, Clausel got his whole army across the river at Alba de Tormes, during the night; and with such expedition was the retreat conducted, that, although Wellington was in motion next morning by daylight, and moved straight in that direction, it was not till noon that the British came up with the rearguard, who were posted near La Serna. Such was the depression which prevailed among the French cavalry, that they gave way on the first appearance of the Allied horse, and left the infantry to their fate. The foot-soldiers, however, stood firm, and formed, with great readiness, three squares on the slope of the hill which they were ascending, to resist the squadrons which soon came thundering upon them. The charge was made by Bock's German, and Anson's brigade of English dragoons; and it is remarkable as being one of the few instances in the whole Revolutionary war, in which, on a fair field, and without being previously shaken by cannon, infantry in square were broken by cavalry. The German horse first charged, on two faces, the nearest square, which was lowest down the hill. The French soldiers stood firm, and, the

82.
Brilliant charge of the German dragoons on the French rearguard. July 23.

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1812.

¹ Gurw. ix.
305. Beamish, ii. 83,
85. Belm. i.
234. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 52.

front rank kneeling, received the gallant horsemen with the rolling fire of the Pyramids. But a cloud of dust, which preceded the cavalry, obscured their aim; a single horse, which dashed forward and fell upon the bayonets, formed an opening; at the entrance thus accidentally made, the furious dragoons rushed in, and in a few seconds the whole square were sabred or made prisoners.¹

83.
Two other
squares are
broken by
the German
horse.

Encouraged by this success, Bock's men next charged the second square, which also received them with a rolling fire; but their courage was shaken by the fearful catastrophe they had just witnessed; a few of them broke from their ranks and fled; and, the whole now wavering, the horsemen dashed in, and the greater part of the battalion was cut down or taken. Not content with these triumphs, the unwearied Germans prepared to charge the third square, to which the fugitives from the two others had now fled, and which was at the top of the hill, supported by some horse who had come up to their assistance. The French cavalry were speedily dispersed, and the square was in like manner broken by an impetuous charge of this irresistible cavalry. In this glorious combat, the Germans had above one hundred men killed and wounded; but nearly the whole of the enemy's infantry, consisting of three battalions, were cut down or made captives. The prisoners taken were about twelve hundred. This action deserves to be noticed in a particular manner, as having been, on the enemy's own admission, the most brilliant cavalry affair which occurred during the war.^{2*}

² Beamish,
ii. 83, 85.
Gurw. ix.
305. Jones,
ii. 110.
Belm. i.
234. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 52, 53.
Nap. v. 182,
183.

* "The boldest charge during the war was made the day after the battle of Salamanca, by the Hanoverian general Bock, at the head of the heavy brigade of the King's German Legion."—FOR'S *Guerre de la Péninsule*, i. 290. Colonel Napier, who is not favourable to cavalry as an arm in war, hardly seems to do justice to his brave comrades, the Germans, in this action, though he admits their uncommon gallantry.—Compare NAPIER, v. 184; and BEAMISH'S *King's German Legion*, ii. 83, 85.—Napier says merely that the dragoons "surmounted the difficulties of the ground, and went clean through the square; then the squares above retreated, and several hundred prisoners were made by these

After this defeat of their rearguard, the French army fell into great confusion; and, there being no supplies whatever for the troops, numbers dispersed in every direction in quest of subsistence. But with such extraordinary celerity was this retreat conducted, that Clausel's headquarters were at Flores de Avila, no less than *forty miles* from the field of battle, on the first night after it, —a prodigious stretch, in little more than twelve hours, for any army, but especially for one which on the preceding day had undergone the fatigues of a desperate battle. By this forced march, however, the French general both got beyond the reach of farther molestation from his pursuers, and joined Caffarelli's artillery and horsemen, fifteen hundred strong, who were advancing from the army of the north, and took the place of the discomfited and wearied rearguard. Still continuing their retreat with rapid strides, they crossed the Douro, and never stopped till they got to Valladolid. Wellington continued the pursuit beyond that river to the same place, where he took seventeen cannon, and eight hundred sick;* but seeing no prospect of coming up with the enemy, who were retiring towards Burgos, and aware that they were disabled, for a considerable time, from undertaking any active operation, having been reduced to half their numbers, he desisted from the pursuit, recrossed the Douro, and moved against the army of the centre and Madrid.¹ He left Clinton, with his division

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84.

Rapid retreat of the French to Valladolid.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

July 24.

July 29.

July 30.

¹ Nap. v.
185, 186.Jones, ii.
111.Wellington to
Lord Bath-

urst, Aug.

4, 1812.

Gurw. ix.

330, 331.

Vict. et

Cong. xxi.

52, 53.

Aug. 6.

able and daring horsemen."—v. 183. This is hardly the due account of a charge, which Wellington says "was one of the most gallant he ever witnessed, and by which the whole body of the enemy's infantry, consisting of three battalions, were made prisoners," (GURWOOD, ix. 305)—which JONES says took nine hundred prisoners, (ii. 110)—which BELMAS admits destroyed nine hundred men, (i. 234)—and which BEAMISH, in the *Annals of the King's German Legion*, asserts took nearly fourteen hundred prisoners, (ii. 85.)

* At Olmedo, which the British entered on the 27th, the brave French general Ferey died of his wounds. The Spaniards had forced the body from the grave before the English soldiers came up; but when the light division arrived, the men rescued the remains of their gallant antagonist in arms from his infuriated enemies, re-made the grave, and heaped rocks upon it for additional security. Recalled to their better feelings by this generous action, the Spaniards applauded the deed.—See NAPIER, v. 185, 186.

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85.
Retreat of
Joseph
towards
Madrid.

and Anson's horse, and the Galicians under Santocildes, to make head against the army of the north in his absence.

Joseph was at Blasco Sancho on the 25th, when he received the stunning intelligence of the defeat, and was made aware by Clausel that he was unable to keep the field to the south of the Douro, and must immediately cross that river, in order to preserve his depots at Valladolid and Burgos. By a rapid movement upon Arvalo, Joseph could still have effected a junction with the army of Portugal; but he wisely declined to link his fortunes with those of a beaten and dejected host, and retraced his steps towards Madrid, in order to preserve his communication with the unbroken forces under Soult in Andalusia, and Suchet in Valencia. Unwilling, however, as long as he could avoid it, to repass the Guadarrama, he moved first to Segovia, from whence he sent positive orders to Soult to evacuate Andalusia, and join him on the frontiers of la Mancha; and at the same time transmitted to the minister of war at Paris the most bitter complaints against all the marshals, whose jealousies and separate interests rendered them, he affirmed, insensible to the public good, and doomed him to be the impotent spectator of the Emperor's and his kingdom's ruin.^{1*}

¹ Belm. i.
672. Viet.
et Conq.
xxi. 53, 54.
Gurw. ix.
349.

He was soon obliged, however, by the approach of the British, to abandon Segovia, and retreat across the Guadarrama, where he was speedily followed by the Allies, who on the 11th crossed the ridge, and occupied the Escorial. Joseph, with two thousand horse, was at

* "The few troops at my command, in the army of the centre, are assembled in the environs of Madrid. The whole provinces of the centre are evacuated, and even the important positions of the Somo-sierra and Buytrago. I should not have been reduced to these painful extremities, if the general-in-chief of the army of the north had obeyed the instructions I have so often given him, to succour, at all hazards, the army of Portugal, and abandon for the moment all lesser points, as I have just done. I repeat it, M. Duke, if the Emperor cannot discover means to make the generals of the north, of Aragon, and of the south, obey me, Spain is lost, and with it the French army. I have

Navalcarnero, to watch and retard the movements of the British ; and a reconnoissance, made by him in the evening, brought on a shock at Majalahonda with the Portuguese cavalry under General d'Urban, which formed the advanced guard of the Allies. These squadrons, though they had behaved with great gallantry at the battle of Salamanca, were on this occasion seized with an unaccountable panic, and turned about before they reached the enemy, overthrowing in their flight three guns of horse-artillery, which in consequence fell into the hands of the French cavalry. The German horse, however, who were immediately in rear, behaved with their accustomed gallantry, and checked the pursuers, though not without a considerable loss to themselves ; which in all amounted to three hundred men. The French again retired, after burning the gun-carriages they had taken ; and on the same evening the Allied advanced posts were pushed to the neighbourhood of Madrid.¹

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1812.

86.

Action at
Majalahon-
da, in which
the Portu-
guese are
worsted.
Aug. 11.

† Joseph to
Soult, July
29, 1812.

Belm. i.
672. Wel-
lington to
Lord Bath-
urst, Aug.
13, 1812.
Gurw. ix.
349. Jones,
ii. 112.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
53, 54.

Great was the consternation which prevailed in that capital on the near approach of the English army. Rumour, with its hundred tongues, had even exaggerated the disasters of the French troops ; faction was abashed in the awful presence of patriotic triumph ; selfish ambition sank into the earth at the prospect of the immediate overthrow of its golden dreams. Straitened as the court of Joseph had been for a long period, there was yet a multitude of persons who were implicated in its fortunes, and beheld with alarm the prospect of its overthrow. The monarch had collected round the seat of government a great number of idle retainers, and all that multitude

87.

Great agita-
tion in
Madrid on
the approach
of the Eng-
lish army.

always told you, and I now repeat it, because affairs are daily becoming more urgent, that the generals who attend only to their own provinces, and not to the general result of the operations, ought to be dismissed as an example to their successors, who should be instructed, in the first instance, to obey me ; and that I should no longer be condemned, as heretofore, to be the impotent spectator of the dishonour of our arms, and the loss of the country."—JOSEPH to DUKE DE FELTRE, *Minister-at-War*, July 28, 1812 ; BELM.S. i. 662. 663, App.

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of dependants, numerous in every country, but especially so in one so full of proud hidalgos as Spain, who are destitute of all public principle, and ready to accept the wages of servitude from any master who possesses the reins of power. The long continuance also of the war, and continued occupation of the capital by the French armies, had inspired a great number of persons of good feelings, but no extraordinary firmness, with the belief that the French power was irresistible ; and they had, in consequence, become involved, more or less, with the Napoleon dynasty. All these individuals felt themselves at once exposed to the overthrow of their fortunes, and possibly the last extremities of popular vengeance ; and therefore they began in excessive alarm to prepare for their departure, as soon as the English advanced posts were seen on the southern side of the Guadarrama range.¹

¹ Tor. v. 77.
Jones, ii.
113. South.
vi. 48, 49.

88.

Great joy of
the middle
and working
classes.

On the other hand, the working classes, who had suffered extremely from the long occupation of the capital by the enemy, the continued suspension of commerce, the absence of the landed proprietors, and the exorbitant taxes by which Joseph, in the little circle around the metropolis which alone was really subject to his authority, had endeavoured to realise a scanty revenue for the support of his court, were extravagant in their joy at their approaching deliverance ; and even the presence of the French troops could hardly prevent them from giving vent to it in every possible way. The taxes had become most oppressive. All the old imposts, though nominally repealed, were in fact collected as rigidly as before ; and, in addition to them, a multitude of new duties on corn, oil, meat, and vegetables. Forced loans had repeatedly been exacted from the wealthier classes ; and a tax, first of eight, then ten, then fifteen per cent had been imposed on all houses. Employment there was none. The hospitals were crowded with sick and starving poor ; and of the persons who had died in the first six months of 1812, two-thirds had perished of actual want. Then, as

is usually the case on the eve of a great convulsion, the people were variously affected by hope or terror, according as their interests were likely to be affected by the approaching change. But none viewed it with indifference ; every heart was agitated, and few eyelids were closed in Madrid the night before the British entered the city.¹

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¹ Tor. v. 77.
South. vi.
48, 49.
Jones, ii.
113.

The population of the capital had been reduced, by the French occupation and devastation of the country, to a third of its former amount ; but the people in the surrounding districts were highly excited when they heard that Joseph and his court were retiring : and when the long and mournful trains set out, on the evening of the 11th, for Toledo, crowds from all quarters hastened to Madrid to witness the entrance of their deliverers on the following morning. Long before the British soldiers were seen on the Guadarrama road, every balcony, every window, every door was crowded with eager multitudes. Joy beamed on every countenance ; and the general exultation had led the people to array themselves in the best remaining attire in their possession, so that it could hardly have been imagined to what an extent misery had previously existed. No words can express the enthusiasm which prevailed when the English standards were seen in the distance, and the scarlet uniforms began to be discerned through the crowd. Amidst a countless multitude, wrought up to the very highest pitch of rapturous feeling ; amidst tears of gratitude and shouts of triumph ; through throngs resounding with exultation and balconies graced by beauty ; to the sound of military music and with the pomp of military power—the British army made their entrance into the Spanish capital, not as conquerors but as friends, not as oppressors but deliverers. On that day their chief drank deep of “the purest, holiest draught of power.” The crowd came forth to meet him, not with courtly adulation or bought applause, but with heartfelt gratitude and deep enthusiasm ; for

89.

Entrance of
the British
into Madrid,
and enthusi-
astic joy of
the inhabi-
tants.
Aug. 12.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Tor. v. 77,
78. Jones,
ii. 113, 114.
South. vi.
51, 52. Nap.
v. 194.

90.
Siege and
capture of
the Retiro.

Aug. 13.

famine had been among them, and the wan cheeks and trickling eyes of the multitude who thronged round him to kiss his hand, or touch his horse, bespoke the magnitude of the evils from which he had delivered them. Incredible were the efforts made to manifest the universal transports. Garlands of flowers were displayed from every door; festoons of drapery descended from every balcony; men, women, and children, came pouring out of every house to welcome their deliverers, eagerly pressing on them fruits and refreshments, and seeking to grasp the hands which had freed their country. In the evening a general illumination gave vent to the universal rapture; all distinctions of rank, sex, and profession were forgotten in the festive blaze; and the servitude of four years seemed to be lost in the intoxicating joy of the first moments of emancipation.¹

But while his troops were indulging in contemplation of the glorious scene, and officers and men alike were sharing in the festivities provided for them by the gratitude of the citizens, and feeling "the electric shock of a nation's gratitude,"* the anxious mind of their chief was revolving the means of securing the fruits of this important conquest, and maintaining the brilliant but hazardous position which he had won in the centre of Spain. The Retiro was still in the enemy's hands, garrisoned by seventeen hundred men; but its possession was of the very highest importance, as it contained the greatest arsenal of military stores and artillery which the French possessed in the country; and its loss would entirely disable them, now that the Ciudad Rodrigo train had fallen into the hands of the British, from undertaking the siege of any considerable fortress for a long period of time. Its defences were immediately reconnoitred, and were found to consist of a double set of intrenchments; one so large that an army would have been required for

* Sir R. Peel.

its defence, the other so contracted that the troops, if driven into it, could hardly be expected to withstand a vigorous cannonade. Wellington took his measures accordingly. Preparations were made for assaulting the outer intrenchments, and guns placed in battery to annihilate the enemy when he was shut up in the interior fort. These preparations, rapidly completed, had the desired effect: the commander, knowing the weakness of his post, no sooner saw the assaulting columns formed, than he hastened to make his submission; and the fort was surrendered at discretion, with its whole garrison, one hundred and eighty pieces of artillery, twenty thousand stand of arms, and immense magazines of carriages, clothing, and military stores of all kinds. On the same day Don Carlos d'España was appointed governor of Madrid, and the constitution proclaimed with great solemnity in the principal public places, amidst shouting crowds, who fondly persuaded themselves that the Spaniards had now established their freedom, as well as achieved their independence, and that, having gained the privileges, they were at once to evince the intelligence and earn the fame of the citizens of Athens and Lacedæmon.¹

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LXVIII.
1812.

¹ South. vi.
52, 53.
Jones, ii.
113, 114.
Tor. v. 78,
79. Gurw.
ix. 354, 355.
Nap. v. 194,
195.

Meanwhile Joseph, who had retreated on the road to Aranjuez, was reduced to the most grievous state of perplexity. At the head of only twelve thousand soldiers, he was followed by a motley crowd of above twenty thousand persons of both sexes, and all ages and conditions, who were linked to the fortunes of his court, and whose loud lamentations, clamorous importunity, and real destitution, added inexpressibly to the difficulties of his situation. The mournful procession, which extended almost the whole way from Madrid to Aranjuez, resembled rather those lugubrious troops of captives leaving their homes under the stern severity of ancient war, of which classic eloquence has left us such moving portraits, than any of the ordinary events of modern warfare. The line of the

91.
Deplorable
state of
Joseph on
his retiring
from
Madrid.

CHAP.
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soldiers' march was broken in upon by crowds of weeping women and wailing children ; courtiers, even of the highest rank, were seen desperately contending with common soldiers for the animals which transported their families ; multitudes of persons, bred in affluence and unused to hardship, eagerly sought from casual passengers the necessaries of life. The unhappy monarch had earnestly besought help from Suchet, and had been unsuccessful ; he had commanded Soult to send ten thousand men to his aid at Toledo, and had met with a positive refusal. Thus, destitute alike of friends, consideration, or authority, he was surrounded by a starving crowd of needy dependants : he had literally all the burdens of a crown without either its power, its respect, or its means of beneficence. Such was the miserable condition of this immense array, that the cavalry alone of the Allies would have sufficed to have driven the whole into the Tagus ; and the bridge of Aranjuez might have renewed the horrors of the passage of the Loire, or anticipated those of the Berezina. But Wellington restrained his soldiers, and suffered the crowd to pass over in safety, humanely feeling that the deliverance of the Spanish capital should not be sullied by the massacre of a considerable part of its citizens, and wisely judging that it was not politic to disembarass a fugitive monarch of a crowd of useless and destitute retainers.¹

¹ Soult to Joseph, July 16, 1811. Belm. i. 655. Suchet to Joseph, June 30, 1812. Ibid. i. 659. Nap. v. 192, 193.

92.
General
breaking
up of the
French
power in
Spain.
Aug. 13.

July 30.

The French affairs in every part of the Peninsula now exhibited that general crash and ruin which so usually follow a great military disaster, and presage the breaking up of political power. At the same time that the Retiro, with its immense warlike stores, yielded to the arms of Wellington, Guadalaxara, with its garrison of seven hundred men, surrendered to those of the Empecinado, who had so long maintained a guerilla warfare in the mountains in its vicinity ; three hundred men had recently before been captured by the partidas near Valladolid ; six thousand were shut up and blockaded in Toro, Tordesillas,

and Zamora on the Douro ; Astorga, long closely besieged, at last surrendered with twelve hundred men ; soon after Torden with three hundred capitulated ; the castle of Mirabete, near Almaraz, had already been blown up ; Talavera and the Puerto de Baños were evacuated, and the French troops in the valley of the Tagus withdrawn to the neighbourhood of Aranjuez.¹

Symptoms also of the evacuation of Andalusia at no distant period were already apparent. In the middle of August the castle of Niebla was destroyed, and the whole district of the same name abandoned. All the archives and valuable effects at Seville were packed up, and the defences of the Cartusa convent in its neighbourhood materially strengthened ; while an unusual degree of bustle in the lines in front of Cadiz led to the suspicion that the French were about to retire from their position before that city. No decided movement, however, to that effect took place till the news arrived of the capture of Madrid ; but no sooner was it received, than the sudden bursting forth of fierce conflagrations in various parts of their lines, and violent explosions in all directions, announced that the long-beleaguered city was to be delivered. At nine on the following morning, the British and Spanish troops made a general sortie, and found the intrenchments deserted, and the work of destruction already far advanced. In a moment the labour of three years had been set at naught : the gigantic intrenchments, constructed at so immense a cost of time and money, were abandoned ; the principal forts were consigned to the flames ; while the rapid approach of the besieged rescued from destruction enormous stores of shot and other warlike implements, which, with five hundred pieces of cannon mounted on the works, besides an equal number which had been destroyed before the garrison came up, were added to the proud warlike trophies of the battle of Salamanca.²

The situation of Wellington was now in the highest degree brilliant ; and the consequences which had already

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Aug. 19.
Aug. 21.
Aug. 15.
¹ Jones, ii.
115. Nap.
v. 194.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
55, 58.

93.

Destruction
of the lines
before
Cadiz, and
raising of
the block-
ade of that
city.
Aug. 25.

Aug. 26.

² Jones, ii.
115, 116,
119. Vict.
et. Cong.
xxi. 55, 61.
Nap. v.
194, 241.

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91.

Advantages
and dangers
of Well-
ington's posi-
tion.¹ *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 18.

attended his exertions, both demonstrated the magnitude of the blow which had been struck, and the skill with which the quarter in which it was delivered had been selected. Never was a more just observation than that made by Napoleon at the very outset of the war,¹ "that the fate of the Peninsula was to be determined in the neighbourhood of Valladolid ; for a stroke delivered there would paralyse all Spain." Already from its effects his power had been loosened in every quarter. The valley of the Tagus had been abandoned, that of the Douro conquered ; Madrid had fallen into the hands of the Allies ; Andalusia was in the course of being abandoned by the French. What was of more importance in a military point of view, the army of the north was now irrevocably separated from that of the centre : the former, not above twenty thousand strong, was thrown back, routed and discouraged, into the neighbourhood of Burgos ; the latter, encumbered with a host of fugitives, was flying in dismay over the plains of la Mancha. But these, certainly great advantages, were counterbalanced by corresponding dangers ; and to the eye which, undazzled by present events, looked forward to the future issue of things, there were many causes for anxiety in the prospects of the English general, and not the least were those which gave the greatest lustre to his present situation. The power of the French in Spain had been loosened, not destroyed : one victory, and the capture of two fortresses, could not overthrow the fabric reared by four years of conquest. The abandonment of the remoter provinces by the imperial generals, would only augment the force which they could concentrate in the heart of the monarchy ; woful experience had sufficiently demonstrated that no reliance was to be placed on Spanish co-operation, and that the liberation even of the richest provinces brought no corresponding accession of strength to the standards of Wellington. Thus, disaster might possibly in reality improve the situation of the French generals ; and, by

compelling them to concentrate their forces, and loosen their hold of the remoter parts of Spain, so obstinately forced upon them by Napoleon for the purpose of levying contributions, be the means of bringing an overwhelming force against Wellington in its centre.

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Soult, even before matters had arrived at their present critical situation, had long entertained lofty, and yet reasonable, views regarding the maintenance of the French power in the Peninsula. Though they were founded, as those of all the marshals at that period were, upon the immediate interests of his own province, and proposed an arrangement which was to bring him into the supreme direction of its military affairs, yet it is doubtful whether, by any other combination, an equally formidable force could have been brought against the English general. His plan, founded on the necessity of retaining their hold both of Andalusia and Valencia as the great reservoirs of their resources, and the impossibility of doing so with effect while the centre of Spain was also occupied with insufficient forces, was, that Joseph himself should come to Andalusia with all the troops he could collect, and so reinforce the army of Estremadura to such an extent as might enable it to resume the offensive in the Alentejo, and fix the seat of war in the Portuguese provinces on the left bank of the Tagus.* Impressed with these ideas, it was with the most poignant regret that this able commander received the formal order from the King,¹ already

95.
Able views
of Soult at
this period
for the re-
establish-
ment of
affairs.

¹ Nap. v.
89. Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
60, 62.
Belm. i.
656.

* "I see clearly the danger of your majesty's position; but any troops which I could send you would be insufficient to re-establish your affairs, unless the whole army of the south should march, which would occasion the loss of Andalusia, and, by necessary consequence, of Valencia. From one post to another, we should be driven to the Ebro. Now, all that might be avoided. We can by a single word from your majesty save six thousand sick and wounded, whom I shall be compelled to abandon, preserve two thousand pieces of cannon, the only reserve park that now remains in Spain, and abridge the war by at least six campaigns. I propose that your majesty should yourself come, with all the troops you can collect, to Andalusia; that will enable us to increase the army in Estremadura to such an extent as will fix the seat of war in the Portuguese provinces to the south of the Tagus."—*Soult to Joseph, 16th July 1812; Belmas, i. 656.*

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96.

His remon-
strance
against the
evacuation
of Andalu-
sia.

mentioned, to evacuate Andalusia, and thus lose at once the fruit of three years' labours.

"The southern provinces," he observed, "hitherto such a burden, now offer the means of remedying the present disasters. To sacrifice them, for the sake of regaining the capital of Spain, is folly; it is purchasing a town at the price of a kingdom. Philip V. thus lost it, and yet preserved his throne. The battle of the Arapeiles was merely a grand duel, which might be fought over again with a different result; but to abandon Andalusia, with all its stores and establishments, to raise the siege of Cadiz, sacrifice the guns, the equipments, the hospitals, and the magazines, and thus render null the labour of three years, would be to render the battle of the Arapeiles a prodigious historical event, which would be felt all over Europe, and even in the New World. Collect, then, the army of the centre, the army of Aragon, and, if possible, the army of Portugal, and march upon Andalusia, even if in so doing you should be obliged to evacuate Valencia. By doing this, a hundred and twenty thousand men will be assembled on the southern frontier of Portugal. If the army of Portugal remain on the north, let it do so: it can defend the line of the Ebro; and the moment eighty thousand men are assembled to the south of the Sierra Morena, the theatre of war is changed, and the English general must fall back to save Lisbon."¹

¹ Soult to
Joseph,
Aug. 12,
1812. Nap.
v. 589.
Appendix.

97.

Refusal of
Suchet to
send any
succour to
Joseph.

Important and daring as these views for the maintenance of French ascendancy in Spain undoubtedly were, they involved a sacrifice of the capital, the central provinces of the monarchy, and the communication with France, to which Joseph could by no means reconcile his mind. Nor, if he had adopted Soult's views, would it have been an easy matter to carry them into execution; for the army of Portugal was totally unable to undertake any such march as that from the Ebro to the Guadalquivir; the army of the centre, with its fearful train of dispossessed and starving courtiers, would be rather a

burden than an assistance; and Suchet, with the forces of Aragon, so far from being prepared to sacrifice his hard-won conquests in the east of Spain by following the King's standard into Andalusia, had positively refused to send him any succour, even to prevent his capital from falling into the enemy's hands.* The plan proposed by Suchet, that the retreat of the army of the centre should be upon Valencia, and that Soult with that of the south should be directed to fall back in the same direction, if less brilliant and daring, was more feasible and prudent than that of Soult.¹

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That marshal proposed that the whole centre of the Peninsula should be evacuated, and the French forces assembled in two masses on the Ebro and the Guadalquivir; and this plan had the great, and, in Joseph's estimation, decisive advantage, that it at once kept open the great lines of retreat with France, and communications with each other, both by the routes of Barcelona and Bayonne. Positive orders accordingly were transmitted to Soult to continue and complete the evacuation of Andalusia, and fall back with all his forces towards Valencia. The marshal, much against his will, obeyed these instructions, and the French troops in every quarter took the road for Murcia. But such were the feelings of exasperation excited on both sides by these calamities,

98.
Soult is
compelled
to evacuate
Andalusia.

Aug. 14.

* "I am well aware that the most formidable enemies which the Emperor now has in the Peninsula are the English, and see clearly the importance it would be, if I could send your majesty a corps of fifteen thousand or twenty thousand men; but when the impossibility of doing so is as clearly demonstrated as it is at this moment, I conceive it is my first duty to make you aware of the advantage of preserving our conquests in Valencia. They offer a point of retreat at once to the army of the centre and that of the south, and preserve the great line of communication with France by the eastern coast. Valencia is the true point of retreat: Wellington will never fight so far from his ships. His only object by his invasion is to reap the harvests of Leon, and induce your majesty to evacuate Andalusia. My first duty is to act according to the Emperor's instructions of 24th April: any detachment towards Madrid would compromise the fate of the provinces of Catalonia and Valencia. I see with extreme regret I have lost your Majesty's confidence, and pray you to give me a successor."—SUCHET to JOSEPH, June 30, 1812; BELMAS, i. 657, 661.

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¹ Soult to
the Duke
de Feltre,
Aug. 12,
1812. Nap.
v. 591, and
236, 238.

and this immense abandonment of territory, that mutual and most acrimonious complaints were made on both sides to Napoleon—Joseph accusing Soult of disobedience of orders, and a design to make himself king of Andalusia ;* and Soult accusing Joseph to the French war minister of disloyalty to his brother, and forgetfulness of the Emperor's interests in the separate concerns of his own dominions.¹

99.
Operations
of Hill in
Estrema-
dura.

July 24.

When Wellington first moved into the plains of Leon, Hill received orders to remain on the defensive in Estremadura, and not fight with his opponent unless an opportunity should occur of doing so obviously to advantage. At this period it was Drouet's interest to have urged on a battle, as a serious loss in the south, even if consequent on a victory in the north, might have compelled Wellington to divide his forces, or even arrest his career of success. He advanced accordingly with twenty-four thousand men to Santa Marta, with the intention of attacking Hill's corps ; but the position at Albuera, now considerably strengthened by fieldworks, which the English general had assumed, was so formidable that he was deterred from the attempt, and retreated towards the Sierra Morena on the very day of the battle of Salamanca. A variety of affairs of outposts afterwards ensued between the two armies, in one of which Slade's brigade of horse gained a brilliant advantage over the French cavalry. Nothing of importance, however, ensued between the two armies,

* "I have yesterday received the letter in cipher which your Majesty wrote to me from Requena, on the 18th October. At the distance the Emperor is from his capital, there are some things to which we must shut our eyes, at least for the moment. If the conduct of the Duke of Dalmatia is equivocal and doubtful—if his proceedings have even the same aspect as those he formerly adopted when in Portugal, after the taking of Oporto—the time will come when the Emperor may punish him, if he deems it expedient : and perhaps he is less dangerous where he is than here, where a few factious persons, even from the depth of the prisons where they were confined, meditated and all but executed a revolution against the Emperor's authority, on the 2d and 3d October, (Malet's conspiracy.) I think then, sire, it is most prudent not to drive the Duke of Dalmatia to extremities ; taking care secretly, nevertheless, to thwart all his ambitious projects, and using every imaginable precaution to

till the battle of Salamanca had imposed on Soult the necessity of withdrawing his troops altogether from Estremadura, preparatory to the general evacuation of the southern provinces ; and then Hill followed Drouet on his retreat to the Sierra Morena, till he received orders from Wellington to advance by Truxillo and Almaraz up the Tagus towards Madrid, to cover the city on the southern side, while he himself, with the bulk of his forces, proceeded northward to the siege of Burgos.¹

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¹ Jones, ii.
115, 125.
Gurw. ix.
332, 333.

Wellington was not long after he arrived at Madrid, of perceiving that the north was the quarter in which matters had become most urgent, and that it was there that the struggle for the maintenance of his position in the Peninsula was to be undergone. The expected co-operation on the east coast of Spain had, as already mentioned, entirely failed, from Lord William Bentinck's ill-timed and Quixotic direction of the forces in Sicily, by which it was to have made, to the coasts of Italy ; Clausel had been considerably reinforced in the north ; and Madrid had been very far indeed from realising the sanguine expectations which had been formed, as to the extent to which it might provide means for the campaign. A loan of £480,000 had indeed been asked from the city, and nominally agreed to ; but such was the exhaustion of its resources, from the long previous impoverishment and the exactions of the French troops, that this loan produced very little.* The regency of Madrid could not be prevailed on to contribute anything even for the subsistence of the

^{100.}
Wellington's difficulties at Madrid.

secure the fidelity of the army of the south towards the Emperor, and also that of the Spaniards in his suite."—*Confidential Letter, the DUKE DE FELTRE, Minister-at-War, to KING JOSEPH ; Paris, 10th Nov. 1812 ; NAP. v. 595, App.*

* Such was the misery to which the poorer classes of Madrid had been reduced by the long-continued exactions of the French troops and authorities, that when the British arrived, so far from being in a condition to give them any support, they themselves needed relief. Groans of furnishing persons were, in the poorer quarters of the city, heard every night : while in the morning the numerous dead bodies thrown into the streets showed how intense the suffering had been ; and the British officers of the third division and 45th regiment formed by their contributions a soup-kitchen, which rescued hundreds from an untimely death.—See NAPIER, v. 257, 258.

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1812.

¹ Gurw. ix.
369, 371.
Jones, ii.
122. Nap.
v. 258, 260.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
55.

101.
Wellington
moves
against
Clausel
in the
north.

Sept. 1.
²Wellington
to Sir H.
Wellesley,
Aug. 23,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
369, 371.
Jones, ii.
122, 123.
Nap. v. 258,
261. Vict.
et Conq.
xxi. 55.

troops ; the military chest, so far as specie was concerned, was absolutely penniless ; the war with America had, at the most critical period of the contest, closed the principal source from whence grain had hitherto been obtained for the army ; and supplies could be procured only by purchasing corn for hard cash, and at a heavy expense, in Lisbon. The citizens had liberally fed the troops in garrison, and the stewards of the sequestered and royal lands had zealously given the produce of their harvest on the promise of future payment ; but no steps whatever had been taken to augment the military strength of the country, or turn the enthusiasm of the people to any useful account : the guerillas were quietly settling down in the large towns, and striving to console themselves for their privations by the plunder they could collect ; while the people of the capital, deeming the war at an end, were giving themselves up to feasts and bull-fights, without any thought of the serious concerns of their situation.¹

Thus the whole weight of the contest, as usual, was likely to fall on Wellington and his English troops ; and as the north was the vital point of the campaign, and the considerable reinforcements which were coming from England had been directed to Corunna to join him on the Douro, he resolved without delay to direct a large part of his forces thither, and proceed in person to endeavour to gain a base for the future operations of the war in the northern provinces. Leaving, therefore, at Madrid the two divisions of the Allied army which stood most in need of repose, he himself with four divisions set out on the 1st September for Valladolid. Hill was ordered to Aranjuez to assist in covering the capital ; the British and Portuguese from Cadiz were ordered round by sea to Lisbon, with instructions to move up as rapidly as possible to the scene of action ; the Guards and reinforcements from England were directed to land at Corunna, and thence cross Galicia with all possible expedition ;² and every effort was made to bring together as great a dispos-

able force as could be collected in the anticipated seat of war to the north of the Douro.

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102.

The French
retire to
Burgos.
Sept. 8.

The march from Madrid was conducted with great expedition. Leaving that capital on the 1st September, the English general quitted Arvalo on the 4th, passed the Douro on the 6th, at the fords of El Herrera, and on the 7th drove the enemy from Valladolid. This town they had reoccupied during his absence at Madrid, and also carried off their garrisons from Toro and Zamora, Clinton retiring before them to Arvalo. Following them closely, the English general effected a junction with the army of Galicia under Santocildes at Palencia. It was there seen how miserably fallacious had been the representations which had been held forth as to the support which might be anticipated from this portion of the Spanish troops. Instead of thirty thousand men who received rations as soldiers in Galicia, there only joined the army twelve thousand men, ill-disciplined and almost in rags, of whom no more than three hundred and fifty were horse. It was quite evident, the moment they made their appearance, that no reliance could be placed on them to withstand the shock of a single division of French troops. If, however, the appearance of the Spanish force was in the highest degree discouraging, that of the French troops was in a proportionate degree satisfactory to the English; and evinced in the clearest manner the vast chasm which the battle of Salamanca had made in their ranks. As Clausel retired, he broke down all the bridges over the numerous streams which in that mountainous region flow towards the Douro or the Ebro, the repairing of which sensibly retarded the advance of the British; but when he drew near to Burgos, and took up a position covering that town, which compelled the Allies to wait till the bulk of their army came up, it at once appeared how immensely his numbers had been diminished by that memorable engagement itself, and its effects. His battalions could be distinctly numbered; and the whole amount of his

Sept. 17.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Belm. i.
238, 239.
Jones, ii.
124, 125.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
64, 65.
Gurw. ix.
419. Nap.
v. 259, 261.

103.
Description
of the castle
of Burgos,
and the
French
works there.

Atlas,
Plate 71.

troops, including cavalry and artillery, did not exceed twenty-two thousand—a sad contrast to the noble army of forty-five thousand which had so lately crowded the banks of the Guarena.* With this force he did not conceive himself sufficiently strong to fight; and therefore, abandoning Burgos to its fate, he retired to Briviesca, to the north of it, where he was next day joined by General Souham with nine thousand infantry of the army of the north, which increased his force, even after deducting two thousand left in garrison in the castle of Burgos, to fully thirty thousand men.¹

The castle of BURGOS, which has acquired, from the consequences of the siege that followed, a historic character that would not otherwise have belonged to it, occupies the upper part of an oblong conical hill, the lower half of which is surrounded by an uncovered wall of difficult access, while on its summit stands an old square keep, converted by the French into a modern casemated fort. Between these defences, which they found there when they commenced their operations, the French engineers had constructed successive lines of fieldworks, well built and strongly palisaded, which enclosed the two summits of the hill, on the highest of which the old keep, surrounded by a powerful battery, stood, while the lower was crowned by an ancient building called the White Church, which also had been converted into a sort of modern fortress. The battery called the Napoleon battery, round the old keep, was so elevated that it commanded the whole country within cannon-shot around, with the exception of the reverse side of a hill called St Michael, which was a lower eminence, on which the French had constructed a hornwork, with a scarp twenty-five and a counterscarp ten feet high, encircled by strong

* "Clausel had collected twenty thousand infantry, two thousand horse, and fifty guns, with which he had reoccupied Valladolid previous to Wellington's return from Madrid."—BELMAS, i. 238; and CLAUSEL to JOSEPH, 18th August 1812, *Ibid.* p. 672; *Pièces Just.*

palisades, and well furnished with heavy cannon. But its position under the fire of the Napoleon battery rendered it peculiarly difficult to hold it if won by assault. Twenty heavy guns and six mortars were already mounted in this fortress; and, independent of its importance, as commanding the great road from Bayonne to Madrid, its acquisition was an object of the very highest moment to the Allies, as the whole stores and reserve artillery of the army of Portugal were deposited within its walls; and its reduction, by depriving that force of its resources, would probably enable the English general to take up his winter quarters and fix the seat of war on the banks of the Ebro.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Jones, ii.
125, 126.
Belm. iv.
Nap. v. 262,
263. Wel-
lington to
Sir E. Paget,
Sept. 20,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
432 and 436.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
65, 66.

The first effort of the English general was directed against the hornwork of St Michael, the possession of which was indispensably necessary to commencing approaches against the body of the place. Such, however, was the vigour with which the French batteries—which commanded all the fords and bridges over the Arlanza stream, that required to be passed before it could be reached—were served, that it was not till the 19th that the passage was effected, and the outposts on the hill of St Michael driven in. An assault was immediately ordered for the same night, and conducted by Major Somers Cocks, with the light infantry of the first division, Pack's Portuguese, and the 42d British regiment. As soon as it was dark, the troops moved to the attack; and as the works, though formidable, were not yet entirely finished, they succeeded in forcing their way, headed by the 79th, in by the gorge, at daylight the next morning; although the attempt to carry the work in front failed, from the great height of the scarp. The garrison, which consisted of a strong battalion, made a stout resistance; and when they found the entrance in the enemy's possession, collecting themselves into a solid mass, they overpowered all opposition, burst through the assailants, and regained the castle,² with the loss only of a hundred and

104.
Storming of
the horn-
work of St
Michael.
Sept. 19.

² Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
65, 66.
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
Sept. 21,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
437. Jones,
ii. 126, 127.
Nap. v. 264.

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LXVIII.

fifty men, while that of the assailants was above four hundred.

1812.

105.

Repeated
unsuccessful
assaults.

Batteries were now erected against the exterior line of defences, and Wellington had an opportunity of observing in person the strength of the place. Although the lines were far from being complete, and such as would easily have yielded to a very small battering train, yet, such was the almost total destitution of the British army in heavy artillery, that Wellington, from the very first, expressed the most serious apprehensions that he would not be able to breach its ramparts, and that his only chance of success consisted in the failure of the garrison's water, or in their magazine being set on fire.* The attempt, however, was made: twelve thousand men, comprehending the first and sixth divisions, with two Portuguese brigades, were intrusted with the siege; while twenty thousand, supported by ten thousand Spaniards, formed the covering force. Approaches in form were accordingly commenced; although the miserable battering train, which consisted only of three eighteen-pounders and the five iron twenty-four pounder howitzers which had been used at the siege of the forts of Salamanca, gave but little hope of a successful issue to the enterprise. An attempt was made, after the breaching guns had played a few days, to carry the outer wall by assault; but although the troops got into the ditch, and the ladders were fixed against the scarp of the rampart, yet the few who reached its summit were immediately bayoneted, and after a bloody conflict of half an hour the assailants fell back, after having lost three hundred and fifty men.¹

¹ Belm. iv.
273, 279.
Jones, ii.
126. Nap.
ii. 266, 267.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
66, 67.
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
Sept. 2,
1812.
Gurw. ix.
450.

All the attempts to breach the wall of this outer intrenchment by means of the heavy guns having failed,

* "I am apprehensive that the means which I have are not sufficient to enable me to take the castle. I hear the enemy, however, are ill supplied with water, and that their magazines are in a place exposed to be set on fire: I think it possible, therefore, that I may have it in my power to force them to surrender, although I may not be able to lay the place open to assault."—WELLINGTON to LORD BATHURST, 21st Sept. 1812; GURWOOD, ix. 436.

and two out of the three having been silenced by the superior weight of the enemy's fire, an attempt was made to run a mine in such a manner as to blow it down; while the single piece of ordnance which remained in a serviceable condition continued its ineffectual fire against the rampart. The gun could do nothing; but the mine, which was exploded on the night of the 29th, made a chasm in the wall, though not sufficiently wide as to be deemed practicable by the assaulting columns. Still a sergeant and four men, who formed the forlorn-hope, had gained its summit, but they were not supported; and before the next morning the garrison had, with surprising activity, run up such interior defences as rendered all entrance impossible. Recourse was now had to a second mine: a new gallery was run under the wall, and, at four in the afternoon of the 4th October, it was sprung with a terrific explosion, which at once sent many of the French up into the air, and brought down above one hundred feet of the wall. An assault was instantly ordered, both there and at the old breach, and both proved successful. Holmes, with the second battalion of the 24th, quickly forced his way through the smoke and crumbling ruins, almost before the rattle of the explosion had ceased; while Lieutenant Frazer of the same regiment at the same moment carried the old breach; and, both uniting, drove the enemy into their interior line. This important achievement greatly elevated the spirits of the army, which had sunk considerably from the long duration and serious loss of life during the siege; and the speedy reduction of the castle was anticipated, the more especially as some supplies of ammunition had already been received from Santander, and more were known to be on the road, both from Ciudad Rodrigo and Corunna.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

106.

Storming of
the outer
lines.
Sept. 29.

Oct. 4.

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 5, 1812. Gur. ix. 468. Jones, ii. 127. Nap. v. 273, 274. Belm. iv. 281, 284. Vict. et Conq. xxi. 67, 68.

But these promising appearances were of short continuance, and soon gave way to such a succession of disasters, as not only shut out almost all hope of a suc-

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

107.

Successful
sallies of the
garrison.

Oct. 5.

Oct. 7 and 8.

¹ Jones, ii.
128. Gurw.
ix. 478.
Nap. v. 274,
275. Belm.
iv. 286, 290.
Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
68, 69.

cessful issue to the siege, but so seriously depressed the spirit of the army as went far to counterbalance all the advantages of the campaign. Dubreton and his brave garrison, who throughout the whole siege discharged with incomparable vigour and talent the important duty intrusted to them, made the most strenuous efforts to dispossess the besiegers of the vantage-ground they had gained; and, in the first instance, at least, with unlooked-for success. A sally, suddenly directed, on the afternoon of the next day, against the advanced posts of the British within the outer wall, swept them all back and regained the old breach; and though the garrison was driven in again the same evening, yet they had in the mean time destroyed this lodgment, and carried off the tools. The two following days were employed by both parties in indefatigable efforts: the Allies increasing the front of their lodgment, and pushing their sap up to the second line; the French, by frequent sorties and an incessant fire, as well as by rolling shells down the hill, striving to retard them. On the evening of the 8th, however, the head of the sap had, by strenuous exertions, been run to within ten yards of the wall; and Dubreton, seeing an assault of that line imminent, ordered a sally in the night, which succeeded so far, that by a desperate rush the trench was gained, and before the enemy could be driven in again, —which was effected with the utmost gallantry by Major Cocks, who fell dead in the moment of success,—the whole works, constructed with so much labour between the outer and inner line, were destroyed.¹

108.

Increasing
difficulties
of the be-
siegers from
want of
artillery.

It was now evident, that to push the sap on so narrow a front, without the aid of artillery, was hopeless; and every effort was therefore made to increase the fire on the inner line. The arrival of ammunition from Santander enabled the engineers to do this. The one remaining gun was worked incessantly; and the five iron howitzers did such good service, that it was evident that if an adequate supply of ammunition could be obtained, the place

would speedily fall. But the failure of that indispensable article again suspended the operations, and it was not till the 15th that the fire in the breaching batteries could be renewed. It was then directed against the inner circle of the Napoleon battery, while a mine, charged with nine hundred pounds of powder, was run under the church of San Roman. This done, and the howitzers having cleared away the temporary obstructions run up in the breach of the second line, a final assault was ordered for the night of the 18th. At half-past four in the morning, the signal was given by the springing of the mine beneath the church of San Roman, which threw down a part of the wall; and Colonel Browne, at the head of a Portuguese battalion and some Spanish companies, after a violent struggle, established themselves in its ruins. At the same time, a detachment of the King's German Legion carried the breach of the second line; the Guards, at another place, got in by escalade; and the intrenchment was won. Some brave men, in the tumult of victory, even rushed on and got to the summit of the breach of the third line, where the bodies of Major Wurmb and a Hanoverian colonel were found. Unfortunately, however, the efforts of these heroes were, in the darkness of the night, not adequately supported: the troops got dispersed in the space between the second and third line; and Dubreton, who had a powerful reserve in readiness to take advantage of such an incident, instantly rushed down with an overpowering force, and drove the assailants out of the lines they had so gallantly won, with the loss of two hundred men.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.1812.
Oct. 15.

Oct. 17.

Oct. 18.

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 26, 1812. Gurw. ix. 508, 509. Jones, ii. 128, 129. Nap. v. 277, 279. Belm. iv. 291, 295. Viet. et Conq. xxi. 70, 71.

This was the last effort of the besiegers. The siege, which had now continued without intermission for thirty days, had not only occasioned a vast consumption of ammunition to the Allies, which they could ill spare in the exhausted state of their supplies, but it had cost them two thousand brave men killed and wounded, and given the French generals time to assemble forces from all

109.
Wellington raises the siege. Causes of its failure.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

quarters for its relief. Souham, who had succeeded Clausel in the command, and had concentrated his troops at Briviesca, had been joined by the whole army of the north, and strong reinforcements from Alava; in consequence of which, as his force was now raised to forty-four thousand men, he had assumed an offensive attitude, which had obliged Wellington to unite nearly the whole besieging to the covering army, on the day of the last assault. He had even driven in the British pickets, and obtained possession of Quintana Palla on their left, though from this his men were immediately expelled by Sir Edward Paget with two divisions. Accounts, however, were at the same time received from Madrid, which rendered it indispensable for the Allies forthwith to provide for the security of the centre of Spain. Soult, who had without molestation assembled his whole forces in Andalusia, including Drouet's from Estremadura, had marched from Granada in the middle of September, by the way of Caravaca, and effected his junction with the army of the centre, under Joseph, on the 29th of the same month, at Albante. Their united force was sixty thousand strong, without reckoning on any of Suchet's troops.¹

Sept. 15.
Sept. 29.
¹ Jones's
Sieges, ii.
130, 131.
Gurw. ix.
508. Belm.
i. 236. Nap.
v. 288, 290.

110.
Inactivity of
Ballasteros,
and his pro-
clamation
against Wel-
lington.
Sept. 12.

Atlas,
Plate 48.

Ballasteros, whose activity and energy had hitherto procured for him a high reputation, was so mortified at being directed by the Cortes to act in obedience to the directions of Wellington, that at this critical period he not only hung back, and kept his important force in a state of inactivity, but actually published a proclamation to his troops, appealing to the Spanish pride against the indignity of serving under a foreigner; a proceeding for which the government of Cadiz most justly deprived him of his command, and confined him in the fortress of Ceuta. But, meanwhile, the evil was done, and was irreparable: the whole army of the south had united with that of the centre, and was advancing rapidly against Madrid sixty thousand

strong; while the reinforced army of the north, mustering forty-five thousand soldiers, pressed on Wellington on the northern side. Thus, as usual, the whole weight of the contest had fallen upon the British general, whose united force, after the losses and sickness of the campaign, being little more than half the number of the enemy's armies directed against them, a retreat to a central position became a matter of necessity. Accordingly the siege of the castle of Burgos was raised on the night of the 21st, not without severe regret on the part of the English general.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

¹ Jones, ii.
130, 131.
Nap. v. 288.
291. Gurw.
ix. 508, 509.
Wellington
to Lord
Bathurst,
Oct. 26,
1812. Belm.
i. 239, 240.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
70, 73.

Soult's first operations were directed against the castle of Chinchilla, a fort of great strength situated on a high rock at the point of junction of the roads of Alicante and Valencia, and commanding the only rout from the eastern provinces to the capital. It was garrisoned by two hundred and forty men, and, from its inaccessible situation, was wellnigh impregnable. Wellington had calculated upon the siege of this fort retarding the advance of the French from the south a considerable time; and Ballasteros was to have united with the whole guerilla parties from the southern provinces, who would have formed a mass of above twenty thousand combatants, and, united to thirty thousand Anglo-Portuguese under Hill at Toledo, might have seriously retarded, if they could not altogether prevent, the march of Soult and Joseph to the capital. But Ballasteros' disobedience of the orders he had received, enabled Soult, without molestation, not only to assemble his forces, but to continue his march with such rapidity, that he appeared before this fort on the 3d of October; and the castle being immediately invested, it surrendered on the 6th, in consequence of the singular circumstance of lightning having fallen on the garrison, killing the governor and eight men, and wounding a still greater number. Upon this, the remainder, seized with superstitious dread, immediately hoisted the white flag.² By this fortunate catastrophe, coupled with the no less

111.
Operations
of Soult and
Hill in the
centre of
Spain.

Oct. 6.

² Jones, ii.
131, 132.
Nap. v. 291,
292. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 83, 84.
Belm. i.
241. Nap.
v. 308, 309.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

auspicious disobedience of Ballasteros, Soult was enabled to bring his whole force, in conjunction with that of Joseph, in all sixty thousand men, to bear against the centre of Spain, where Hill, now reinforced by the troops from Cadiz, with an army not at the utmost exceeding forty thousand, of whom part were Spaniards, was intrusted with the defence of the capital.

112.

The latter
evacuates
Madrid, and
retires to-
wards Sala-
manca.

In these circumstances, it became a matter of necessity to abandon Madrid, and nothing, it was evident, short of a union of the whole British force in the Peninsula, in a central situation on the plains of Leon, could afford them any chance of maintaining their footing in Spain. Wellington then experienced the truth of what he had long before expressed in his correspondence, viz., that the invasion of Andalusia and the siege of Cadiz, by retaining a large portion of the French force in a state of comparative inactivity, so far as resisting the British army was concerned, had been a sensible benefit to the Allied cause; and that the battle of Salamanca, by inverting this order, and bringing their masses concentrated together, from the mountains of Asturias to the bay of Cadiz, upon the British host, would, in the first instance at least, prove a disadvantage. He transmitted orders to Hill accordingly to abandon the line of the Tagus, which he had hitherto held, evacuate Madrid, and fall back by the Guadarrama pass to the neighbourhood of Salamanca. These directions were immediately obeyed; the preparations for the defence of the line of the Tagus were discontinued; Madrid was evacuated, amidst the frequent tears and mournful silence of the inhabitants; a dense mass of men, women, and children, followed the troops for miles bewailing their departure. On the same day Joseph made his entry, and the British army, at first in good order, took the road for the Guadarrama pass.¹

Nov. 2.
¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 28, 1812.
Gurw. ix. 515, 516.
Jones, ii. 132. Belm. i. 241. Nap. v. 310, 314.

Meanwhile Wellington himself had extraordinary hardships to encounter in his retreat from Burgos. No small difficulty was experienced at the very outset in getting

the troops across the bridge of the Arlanza ; for it was commanded by the castle, and the enemy, aware of the intentions of the besiegers, had brought every gun they possibly could to bear on the narrow archway. Such, however, were the precautions taken by the British engineers to prevent the carriages passing from making any noise, as the French had done twelve years before at the siege of the Fort of Bard in the valley of Aosta,¹ that the whole would have got over during the night in safety, had not some irregular Spanish horse heedlessly galloped past, and, by their ill-timed clatter, attracted the attention of the garrison, who instantly commenced a heavy fire on the bridge, then crowded with carriages. It at first was very destructive ; but the aim was soon lost as the guns recoiled, and the remaining discharges, which continued through the whole night, did little or no mischief. This night-march, which, from its extraordinary difficulty and boldness, had never been anticipated by the French generals, gave Wellington a full day's journey in advance of them, and the French cavalry did not overtake the Allies in any force till the forenoon of the 23d.²

Several sharp affairs between the horse on either side then took place. In particular, at the passage of the Hormaza, General Anson's brigade twice charged the head of the pursuers as they forded, and for three hours checked the pursuit. A more serious action took place near Venta de Pozo, when the French cavalry, who had at length forced the passage, and were hotly pursuing Anson's horsemen, who were retiring in disorder, were received by two battalions of the King's German Legion drawn up in square. The imperial cavalry came on with their wonted gallantry and loud shouts, but they were unable to retaliate upon the Germans the disaster of the 23d June :³ the steady squares received them with a rolling volley ; and after several ineffectual charges, in the course of which they sustained a severe loss, the

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

113.

Great difficulties of Wellington's retreat.

¹ *Ante*, ch. xxxi. § 72.

Oct. 21.

² Gurw. ix. 511, 512. Nap. v. 295, 296. Vict. et Conq. xxi. 76.114.
Gallant conduct of the rearguard on the retreat.
Oct. 23.³ *Ante*, ch. lxviii. §§ 82, 83.

CHAP.
LXVIII.1812.
Oct. 24.

French squadrons were obliged to withdraw, and the retreat on that day was continued without any farther molestation. The army, retiring in two columns, crossed the Pisuerga, and headquarters were fixed for the night at Cordovilla. Much disorder prevailed there during the night, in consequence of the soldiers, whose discipline had become relaxed from the very commencement of the retreat, breaking into the subterranean vaults in that vicinity, where the wine of the vintage was stored. The effects of intemperance generally appeared when the troops began to move next morning; but luckily the enemy was not aware of the circumstance, and the retreat of twenty miles was conducted that day without molestation as far as Duenas, across the Carrion, where the Guards, who had disembarked at Corunna, joined the army nearly on the spot where Sir John Moore had commenced his forward movement against Soult four years before.¹

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 26, 1812. Gurw. ix. 511, 512. Beamish, ii. 111, 116. Vict. et Cong. xxi. 76, 77. Nap. v. 295, 298.

115.
Continuance of the retreat across the Carrion, and actions there.

Oct. 25.

It had now become evident that the French cavalry, nearly double that of the Allies, and fresh from cantonments, while the British and Portuguese were exhausted by the fatigues of a long campaign, could hardly be opposed with success in the open field. The utmost vigilance, therefore, was requisite in conducting a long march, in presence of an enemy so superior in numbers generally, and especially predominant in that arm, so essential during a retreat. The troops, accordingly, were rested a day behind the Carrion, to recruit their strength and give time for concentration; the whole bridges over that river were mined for explosion, and on the day following the retreat was continued towards the Douro. Unfortunately, however, the bridges of Palencia over the Carrion had not been occupied in sufficient strength, and Foy drove out the troops who held the town, and gained the bridges before the explosion took place. A ford was also dexterously discovered by the enemy near Villamuriel, while the bridge over the Pisuerga at Tariejo was

prematurely fired, and failed in its effect, so that the French horsemen galloped over, and made the party in possession of the town prisoners. These untoward events destroyed the strength of Wellington's position, for over the bridges thus won the enemy could pour in any numbers they chose; and the left was accordingly thrown back, which had been hotly engaged nearly the whole day. At length the English general, seeing that the enemy's progress in that quarter seriously endangered the whole army, repaired to the spot, and ordered an offensive movement to drive the French back again over the river. Those who had crossed the ford at Villamuriel were immediately attacked by two brigades under Major-general Oswald's orders, and driven across the Carrion with considerable loss, though the Allies suffered severely, and Alava was wounded while heading the Spanish infantry in the pursuit.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.
1812.

¹ Jones, ii.
134, 136.
Nap. v. 301,
304. Gurw.
ix. 512. Viet.
et Cong.
xxi. 78, 79.
Belm. i.
242.

After this check, the army retired sixteen miles on the following day without molestation to Cabezon, on the left bank of the Pisuerga; and, as the ground on that side of the river is very strong, and the approach to the bridge difficult, the troops were halted for two days there, while the destruction of the bridge at Tordesillas equally prevented their progress in that direction. On the 29th, the bridges at Cabezon and Valladolid were both blown up, and the army retreated across the Douro, the whole bridges over which were destroyed. The French, however, having got a body of horse across by swimming, immediately commenced repairing the bridge at Tordesillas; upon which the British were moved in strength to that point, and immediately began establishing batteries, which stopped the advance of the enemy in that quarter. Souham made no farther attempt to continue the pursuit beyond the Douro at this time, as he was unwilling to hazard a general engagement till the approach of Joseph and Soult enabled him to do so with a decided superiority. Thus the British remained unmo-

116.
Junction of
Wellington
and Hill
near Sala-
manca.

Oct. 29.

Nov. 6.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

Nov. 8.
1 Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
78, 83.
Jones, ii.
133, 137.
Nap. v. 302.
304. Gurw.
ix. 512, 516.

lested behind its broad stream till the 6th of November, when the bridges both at Toro and Tordesillas having been restored, and the near approach of Soult, with an overwhelming force from the south, rendering the line of the Douro no longer tenable, the retreat was resumed. On the 8th the army effected its junction with Hill's corps, and both united, took up a position at Alba de Tormes and San Christoval, on the ground which the army had twice occupied before, and which was hallowed by the recollection of the glorious victory of which it had been the theatre.¹

117.
And of Soult
and Souham.

While the British, who possessed the advantage of an interior line of communication, were thus concentrating their forces in front of Salamanca, Soult was following Hill's corps with all the expedition in his power, and stretching out his light troops to the northward, in order to feel for the army of Souham, which was descending from the Douro. On the 6th, his headquarters were at

Nov. 7.

Arvalo, and on the day following the advanced posts of the two armies entered into communication by Medina Campo. The main bodies were not long in effecting a junction; and on the 10th the united force advanced towards the British post at Alba de Tormes. General Hamilton, with a brigade of Portuguese, held the castle at that place, round which some fieldworks had been hastily constructed; and though Soult battered it with eighteen pieces of artillery, to which the Allies had only four guns to reply, yet their fire of musketry was kept up with such vigour that the enemy did not venture upon an assault, but sought for and found a ford higher up the Tormes, at Galisancho. On the following day the

² Jones, ii.
139, 140.
Nap. v. 319.
321. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 85, 86.
Belm. i.
241, 242.
Gurw. ix.
520, 542,
552.

whole French army passed over, and took post in a strong position near Mozarbes, from whence detachments of their numerous cavalry threatened the communications of the British with Ciudad Rodrigo. The force now at the disposal of the French marshals was very formidable, amounting to no less than ninety-five thousand men,² of

whom twelve thousand were superb cavalry, with a hundred and twenty pieces of cannon.*

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

118.

Wellington
offers battle,
which is
refused.

To oppose this immense force, Wellington had fifty-two thousand British and Portuguese, including four thousand horse, eighty-nine guns, and fourteen thousand Spaniards; but on the last little reliance could be placed in a regular engagement. With so great an inferiority, it was impossible for the English general to attack the French on the strong ground which they themselves had selected; but he offered battle on his own ground, and for this purpose withdrew to the famous position of Arapelles. The sight of that memorable field strongly excited the soldiers of both armies; the French, conscious of their superiority in number, demanded with loud cries to be led to the combat, hoping to wash out the recollection of their former defeat on the very spot on which it had been sustained. The sight of the ground, still blanched by the skeletons of their countrymen, and strewn with fragments of casques and cuirasses, excited in the highest degree their warlike enthusiasm. The British, nothing doubtful of the result of a second battle of Salamanca, clustered in great strength on the two Arapelles, and the ridge of Ariba: and gazing with stern resolve on the interminable masses of the enemy, panted for the thrilling moment which was to bring to a decisive issue their long-protracted contest. The opinions of the French generals, however, were divided as to the course which should be pursued. Jourdan, whose martial fire age had not extinguished, was eager to fight immediately; and for this purpose proposed to bear down at once on the Allies, and hazard all on the issue of a single battle. Soult, on the other hand, better instructed in the character of the troops with whom he had to deal, hesitated to attack them where they stood, and, instead, moved a considerable part of his force to the left,¹ so as

¹ Belm. i. 242. Vict. et Cong. xxi. 87, 88. Jones, ii. 140. Gurw. ix. 552, 553.

* "The three united armies mustered ninety-five thousand combatants."—BELMAS, i. 242.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

119.
He retreats
to Ciudad
Rodrigo.
Nov. 15.

to menace the communication with Ciudad Rodrigo, much as Marmont had done, but on a wider circle, so as to be beyond the reach of the falcon swoop which had proved so fatal to his predecessor.

Wellington, knowing that the immense superiority of the enemy, especially in cavalry, rendered it an easy matter for them to outflank his position, and disturb his communications, took the resolution, as they would not fight, to retreat : already the baggage had defiled through Salamanca, and at three o'clock in the afternoon several loud explosions in the British rear announced to both armies that the movement had commenced. The operation, however, was a very hazardous one ; for, in performing it, the Allied army, defiling almost within cannon-shot of the enemy, presented their flank, several miles in length, to his attack ; and a daring general had the same opportunity for a brilliant stroke which had been presented to Wellington by Marmont, on the same ground, four months before. Possibly the extreme ardour of the French soldiers might, notwithstanding the prudence of their leader, have brought on a general action ; but in that decisive moment the star of England prevailed. A violent storm of rain, accompanied by a thick mist, came on, which for two hours rendered it impossible to see any object more than a few yards ahead ; and during this interval of darkness, the whole British army moved safely past the dangerous ground, in three columns, having the advantage of moving on the high-roads, while the enemy could only attack by cross lanes, now almost impassable from wet. A few cavalry alone followed the Allies, and made two hundred prisoners ; and the single trophy which the enemy could show from a crisis which might have changed the fate of Spain and the world, was the English second in command, Sir Edward Paget, who accidentally fell on the day following into the hands of a small party of horse, while riding unattended from one column to the other, during the darkness of a severe storm.¹

¹ Viet. et
Conq. xxi.
86, 89.
Belm. i.
242, 243.
Jones, ii.
140. Nap.
v. 328, 330.
Gurw. ix.
552, 553.

The retreat from the Arapeiles to Ciudad Rodrigo lasted but three days, and it was only disturbed by the cavalry of the French, almost all their infantry and guns having halted at Salamanca. Nevertheless the distress of the troops for the most part was great, the disorders frightful, and the loss sustained very considerable. During the whole march the weather was to the last degree inclement; storms of wind and rain succeeded each other with hardly any intermission; and the spirit of the soldiers, already weakened by the long continuance and severe fatigues of the retreat, sank in an extraordinary degree, and precipitated them into general confusion and insubordination. The roads were so broken up that it was with the utmost difficulty that the guns and baggage-waggons could be dragged through; the supplies, especially of Sir R. Hill's corps, almost totally failed, from the troops having been thrown off their former communications without gaining any new ones; and the soldiers, compelled to straggle in quest of subsistence, fell into the usual disorders of a disorganised army. Many yielded to the unbounded passion for intoxication which breaks out in all men during severe distress, but has in every age been in a peculiar manner the disgrace of the English people. On the 16th the march of the army was through a continued forest, where vast quantities of swine were feeding under the trees; the soldiers immediately dispersed to shoot the prey thus presented to their hand; and such a rolling of musketry was heard through the woods, that Wellington at first thought the enemy were upon them.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

120.

Extraordinary hardships and losses of the retreat.

Nov. 16.

¹ Jones, ii. 140. Nap. v. 334, 335. Belm. i. 243.

A sharp skirmish took place as the rearguard of the army was descending the steep slope which leads from the high table-land covered with the forest to the Huebro stream, which, however, was passed with very little loss. A deviation from orders on the part of some of the officers in direction of columns, had soon after wellnigh occasioned a serious loss, by taking the men to a place where

121.
Ciudad Rodrigo is at length reached in great distress.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

Nov. 17.

the road, though more direct, was crossed by a river in an impassable state of flood. From this dilemma they were only extricated by being led back by Wellington in person, fortunately without the enemy's knowledge, to the ford which he had originally assigned ; and on the 17th the weather was so dreadful, and the privations of the troops so excessive, that most serious disasters might be anticipated if the retreat were conducted farther in such calamitous circumstances. Happily, as this was the worst day of their suffering, so it was the last : Soult, whose troops were suffering nearly as much as those of the Allies, was compelled by utter starvation to discontinue the pursuit at the Huebro ; a few squadrons only followed to the Tamanes ; on the 18th the weather cleared up ; provisions in plenty were obtained from the magazines at Ciudad Rodrigo, and liberally served out to the famishing troops ; and the wearied men, finding fuel and dry bivouacs on the sandy hills near that fortress, forgot their fatigues around the blazing watchfires, and, after six months' incessant toils and dangers, sank into the enjoyment of undisturbed repose.¹

Nov. 18.

¹ Nap. v.
334, 335.
Jones, ii.
140, 141.
Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
88, 89.
Belm. i.
243. Gurw.
ix. 554, 555.

122.
Both armies
are put into
winter quar-
ters.

Both parties were now thoroughly exhausted with their fatigues, and not only rest, but a separation on either side in quest of subsistence, had become indispensable. If Soult had remained with all his forces together for a week longer, one-half of his soldiers, and probably all his horses, would have perished of actual famine ; and if Wellington's retreat in similar storms had continued a few days more, his army would have been wellnigh dissolved. Both the French and the English commanders accordingly put their troops into winter quarters, and the vast arrays which had so recently crowded the banks of the Tormes were dispersed over a wide extent of surface. The British went into cantonments on the Coa and the Agueda ; the left being thrown back to Lamego, and the right advanced to Bejar, to hold the pass of Baños. Headquarters were again established at Frenada. Soult's noble army

was entirely dislocated ; his own headquarters were established at Toledo ; Joseph returned with his guards to Madrid ; and the bulk of the force was cantoned in Old and New Castile, between the Douro and the Tagus —Salamanca being occupied in strength by two divisions. But the ground lost in the campaign was never recovered ; Asturias and Estremadura remained in the undisturbed possession of the Spaniards ; the imperial standards never again crossed the Sierra Morena ; and Andalusia, Murcia, and Granada were finally delivered from the oppression of the invader.¹

CHAP.
LXVIII.
1812.

The losses sustained by the British and Portuguese during this retreat, by casualties or prisoners in the field, did not exceed fifteen hundred men ; but the stragglers who fell into the enemy's hands were much more numerous, and the prisoners taken in this way exceeded three thousand. Altogether, from the time that the siege of Burgos was abandoned, the army had been weakened by the loss of nearly seven thousand men. The insubordination of the troops, and the frightful habits of intemperance to which in many cases they surrendered themselves, were the main causes of this serious diminution ; for the retreat had been conducted with extraordinary skill ; the men of both armies had retired above two hundred miles, in presence of greatly superior forces, without a single battalion being broken, or a gun or standard taken. No stores, treasure, or provisions, had been destroyed ; none of the sick and wounded abandoned ; no night marches, with the exception of that under the cannon of the castle of Burgos, had taken place ; the journeys gone over during the day had been far from excessive ; and till the last three days, when the extraordinary throng had occasioned a deficiency in the supplies, no want of provisions had been experienced by the troops. When, notwithstanding these circumstances, it was still found that the loss from the defalcation of marauders and the capture of drunkards had been so serious,² and that the discipline of the army

¹ Vict. et
Cong. xxi.
85, 90.
Belm. i. 243.
Jones, ii.
141. Nap.
v. 337, 340.

123.
Losses of
the retreat,
and severe
address of
Wellington
to his troops.

² Gurw. ix.
575. Wel-
lington to
generals of
division,
Nov. 28,
1812.
Jones, ii.
141. Sche-
rer, ii. 209.
Jackson, ii.
247.

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LXVIII.

1812.

had been relaxed to a great degree during the retreat, Wellington deemed it indispensable to make a great effort to recall all ranks to a sense of their duty ; and for this purpose he addressed a severe letter of admonition to the officers commanding divisions and brigades, complaining in an especial manner of the habitual inattention of regimental officers to their various duties, in so far as the subordination, discipline, and comforts of the troops were concerned.*

124.
Effect it
produced
on the
army.

Never was a document published by a British commander which produced a stronger sensation, or gave rise to more vehement feelings, than this celebrated address. That the complaints were in great part well founded, and that every one's recollection could afford ample confirmation of the material facts stated, was indeed certain ; but still the necessity of publishing them to the army, and consequently, by the English newspapers, to all Europe, was not equally apparent. Even if it had been necessary, it was urged that some allowance should have been made for men who had been engaged for nearly eleven months in constant sieges, marches, or battles ; and whose efforts, during that period, had delivered half of the Peninsula, and drawn upon them the enemy's military force from the whole of Spain.¹

¹ Nap. v.
357. Jones,
ii. 143.

* "The army has met with no disaster; it has suffered no privations which but trifling attention on the part of the officers could not have prevented; it has suffered no hardships excepting those resulting from the necessity of being exposed to the inclemencies of the weather at a time when they were most severe. The necessity for retreat existing, none was ever made on which the troops made such short marches; none on which they made such long and repeated halts; and none on which the retreating armies were so little pressed on their rear by the enemy. Yet, from the moment the troops commenced their retreat from the neighbourhood of Madrid on the one hand, and Burgos on the other, the officers lost all command over the men. Irregularities and outrages of all descriptions were committed with impunity, and losses have been sustained which ought never to have been incurred. The discipline of every army, after a long and active campaign, becomes in some degrees relaxed; but I am concerned to observe, that the army under my command has fallen off in this respect in the late campaign to a greater degree than any army with which I have ever been, or of which I have ever read."—WELLINGTON to *Officers commanding Divisions and Brigades*, ix. 574, 575.

The reproaches, too, though generally well founded, were not applicable to some corps, particularly the light division and Foot Guards, the latter of which had joined from Corunna, and who had conducted their retreat in admirable order; and Wellington was not aware that his own well-conceived arrangements for the supply of provisions to his troops had been, in many cases, rendered totally nugatory, from the impossibility of getting the means of transport for the stores, or the negligence of inferior functionaries in carrying his orders into execution. In some cases, when he supposed the men were getting three rations a-day regularly served out, they were in fact living on acorns which they picked up, or swine which they shot in the woods. For these reasons, the reproof was, not without foundation, complained of as unjust by many; but there can be no doubt that, to the great body of the troops, the justice of the remarks was what rendered them so unpalatable; and that the cogency of the maxim,—“the greater the truth, the greater the libel,” never was more signally evinced than on this occasion. As usual after such admonitions, however, the reproof, though universally complained of, in the end produced salutary effects. The officers loudly declaimed against the injustice with which they had been treated, but quietly set about remedying the disorders which they were well aware had crept into the service; vast improvements were effected in the organisation and arrangements of the troops before the next campaign; and all admitted that it was in a great degree to their beneficial effect that the triumphs of Vitoria and the Pyrenees were to be ascribed.¹

While this surprising campaign was going on in the centre and north of Spain, the operations in the south and on the east coast, though not equally brilliant, sustained the character of the British arms, and, in their ultimate effects, were attended with important results in the deliverance of the Peninsula. It has been already noticed² how much Wellington found his operations

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

125.
Particulars
in which the
proclama-
tion was
unduly
severe.

¹ Nap. v.
357, 359.
Jones, ii.
143. Jack-
son, ii. 217.

126.
Operations
in the south
and east of
Spain.

² *Ante*, ch.
lxviii. § 63.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

July 20.

July 31.

Aug. 7.

July 21.
¹ Jones, ii.
 121. Nap.
 v. 214, 230.
 Tor. v. 111,
 112.

impeded, immediately before the battle of Salamanca, by the project of Lord William Bentinck to commence his grand diversion on the Italian shores, thereby reducing the British expedition destined to act on the east of Spain to six thousand men. Such as it was, however, this armament produced a very considerable impression, and clearly proved of what importance, on the general issue of the campaign, the operations in that quarter, if more vigorously conducted and with a larger force, might have been. General Maitland, who commanded this force, arrived at Port Mahon in Minorca, in the middle of July, and at first stood across for the coast of Catalonia, with a view, if possible, to attempt a *coup-de-main* against Tarragona. Finding, however, though preparations for a considerable rising in that quarter had been made, that there was no Spanish force in existence capable of keeping the field as a regular army, and that they could only bring eight thousand Somatenes into the field, while the French had thirteen thousand disposable men in the province, besides Suchet's force, of a still greater amount, in Valencia, he wisely judged that it would be hopeless to make an effort in that province, and therefore made for Alicante, where a strong fortress, still in the hands of the Murcians, offered a secure base for his operations. There, accordingly, he landed, in the beginning of August; and his arrival was most opportune and beneficial to the common cause, as it saved that fortress, which was menaced with a siege, in consequence of the defeat of General O'Donnell. That general, with the last reserves of the Murcians, six thousand strong, had been totally routed by a division of Suchet's army under Harispe, only ten days before, at the mouth of the pass of Castalla, and was now wholly unable to keep the field.¹

Maitland's forces were all disembarked at Alicante by the 11th August; but, although he found himself in communication with a body of Spaniards considerable in point of numerical amount, no reliance could be placed

upon them for operations in the field ; and he was soon overwhelmed by the innumerable crosses, jealousies, and vexations, to which every British commander throughout the war, without exception, was subjected, who attempted to combine operations with the Peninsular troops, and which the iron will and invincible perseverance of Wellington alone had been able to overcome. The governor of Alicante, in the first instance, refused to give him possession of that fortress, and only a limited number of men were permitted to remain within its walls ; of the British soldiers only three thousand were English or German, who could be relied on for the real shock, the remainder being Mediterranean mercenaries, whose steadiness in action was untried and doubtful ; and the moment operations in the field were proposed, such extraordinary difficulties as to providing subsistence and the means of transport were thrown in the way by the Spanish authorities and commanders, that Maitland abandoned the attempt in despair, and not long after, under the combined influence of bad health and disgust, resigned his command. At the same time twelve hundred men, under General, afterwards Sir Rufane Donkin, disembarked at Denia, to the east of Alicante ; but they were speedily assailed by superior forces, and forced to betake themselves to their ships. Maitland was succeeded by General Mackenzie, who held the command only for a few weeks, when he was superseded by General Clinton ; but he too was paralysed by the difficulties with which he was surrounded ; and though on the 22d November the citadel of Alicante was surrendered to the keeping of the British, still no offensive movement worth noticing was attempted. General Campbell came next with four thousand fresh troops from Sicily ; but the season for active operations had now passed, and the winter was spent in strenuous efforts to put the army on a more efficient footing.¹ It was fortunate that at this period Suchet was so far deceived by the habitual exaggerations of the Spaniards, that he

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

127.

Landing of
the British
forces at
Alicante,
and difficulties
they experienced.

Oct. 5.

Nov. 22.

¹ Belm. i.
244. Nap. v.
341, 349.
Tor. v. 112,
114. Vict.
et Conq.
xxi. 97,
103.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

attempted nothing, believing that the Allies had fifty thousand men in his front. Thus this expedition, though it did nothing else, yet produced the important effect of detaining his whole force in that part of Spain, and preventing any portion of it from joining the mass which was concentrating from all other quarters against Wellington in the plains of Old Castile.

128.
Operations
in Catalo-
nia.

Though the war in Catalonia and the Asturias was not distinguished by any brilliant events during this campaign, yet the Spaniards were in both slowly regaining the ascendancy. The weight of the English army, though distant, operated with sensible effect in both these provinces, and by compelling the French to concentrate their forces to succour menaced points, or await contingent events, allowed the inhabitants to wrest from them several important posts. In spring, Montserrat was abandoned by the invaders, and immediately occupied by Colonel Green, who, with some Spanish bands, again fortified that important stronghold. Decaen and Maurice Mathieu collected their forces, and in the end of July drove the Spaniards a second time from it; but, instead of retaining their conquest, they set fire to the buildings, and the flames of the monastery told all the inhabitants of the adjoining plains that the holy mountain was no longer polluted by the presence of the spoiler. The bands of Lacy, d'Erolles, Rovira, and Milans, however, kept undisputed possession of the whole hill ranges with which the country abounded: the power of the French extended only over the fortresses which they held, and the plains in their immediate vicinity; and so precarious was their authority in more remote quarters, that eight thousand men were required to keep open the communication between Gerona, Barcelona, and Tarragona.¹

July 29.

Oct. 19.

¹ Belm. i.
246. Tor. v.
86, 87. Nap.
v. 341, 342.

In Asturias, an English squadron, commanded by Sir Home Popham, appeared in the end of June on the coast, and did excellent service by keeping the French posts in a state of constant alarm, so as to prevent Caffarelli from

detaching any considerable force to the aid of Marmont previous to the battle of Salamanca. Castro Urdiales, a strong fort on the sea-coast, was taken in the beginning of July, which enabled the squadron to communicate freely with the insurgents in the interior ; and although several attempts on Santander, Guetario, and Bilbao failed, from the strong fortifications with which the French had established themselves in these towns, yet they were all evacuated and fell into the hands of the Spaniards on occasion of the general concentration of the French forces in the northern provinces, which followed the disaster of Salamanca. Bilbao, indeed, was reoccupied by Caffarelli on the 27th August ; but the whole coast from Corunna to Guetario remained in the hands of the Allies, and the English vessels of war powerfully contributed to foment the insurrection in these important provinces. At the same time in the centre of Spain the power of Joseph was so ephemeral, that when Soult, with the armies of the south and centre, passed on in pursuit of Hill's army in the end of October, Elio, the Empecinado, and Bassecour, having united their bands in the neighbourhood of Madrid, reoccupied that capital, where they committed great excesses, and thrust out the garrison, who, with a crowd of helpless dependents, again fell a burden on the unhappy monarch in the plains of Old Castile.¹

Such was the memorable campaign of Salamanca, one of the most glorious, in a military point of view, of which the English annals can boast ; the most decisive in its results in favour of the Allied cause, which had yet occurred in the Revolutionary war. For the first time since the star of Napoleon had appeared in the ascendant, the balance had not only hung even between the contending powers, but inclined decidedly to the Allied side. At the opening of the campaign, the French armies occupied the whole of Spain, from the Asturian rocks to the bay of Cadiz. The great frontier fortresses of Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo were in their hands ; and the British

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.
129.

And in the
Asturias.
June 20.
July 6.

Aug. 15.

Nov. 2.
¹ Belm. i.
246, 247.
Nap. v. 341,
343. Tor. v.
86, 89.

130.
General
results of the
campaign.

CHAP.
LXVIII.
1812.

army, restrained within the bounds of Portugal, seemed unable to pass the giants who stood to guard the entrance into the Spanish territory. At its close, both these vital strongholds had been wrested from their arms ; Andalusia, and the whole provinces to the south of the Sierra Morena delivered from their oppression ; a mortal blow to their power struck on the plains of Castile ; Madrid had welcomed its deliverers within its gates ; and Cadiz, relieved after its three years' blockade, found the gigantic works of its besiegers, and their thousand guns, the trophies of its deliverance. In Marshal Soult's words, the battle of Salamanca had indeed proved a great historic event, which had resounded through Europe and the New World. The campaigns of Marlborough had no such momentous triumphs to commemorate ; the glories of Cressy and Azincour were in comparison sterile in durable results.

131.
Its vast
effect in
loosening
the French
power in the
Peninsula.

Great as was the disappointment felt, in the first instance, in England, at the untoward conclusion of the campaign, and the calamitous issue of the retreat from Burgos, it was yet evident, on a calm retrospect of its results, and the relative situation of parties at its commencement and termination, that the success gained had been immense, and that the French power in the Peninsula had received a fatal wound. True, the British standards had been again driven from the Spanish territory ; true, Wellington had reassumed his old positions on the Coa and the Agueda : but how had this been effected ? By a concentration of the French forces from all parts of Spain, and the abandonment in one month of the fruits of four years of bloodshed, rapine, and conquest. Such a sacrifice could not again be made ; no second Andalusia remained to recruit the armies of the north after another overthrow. A fresh disaster like that of Salamanca would drive the invaders, as by a whirlwind, from the whole Peninsula.¹ The sense of this, which pervaded the breasts of the officers and soldiers in both armies, consoled the

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xxi.
90.

Allies for their retreat, and depressed the imperial legions even in the midst of their transient success.

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

132.

Especially
from the loss
of Andalu-
sia.

The whole warlike establishments of the latter had been lost; in a military point of view, their hold of all the Peninsula to the south of the Ebro had been loosened. The great arsenals of Madrid, Seville, Ciudad Rodrigo, and the lines before Cadiz, had fallen into the enemy's hands or been destroyed; no reserve parks remained to enable them to attempt the siege of the frontier places of Portugal: no fortresses were now in their possession to delay the enemy, should he make a second inroad into the interior of Spain; a single disaster on the Douro would instantly compel the evacuation of Madrid and Valencia, and send the whole French armies in confusion behind the Ebro. A sense of this insecurity paralysed the French as much as it animated the British army; the perception of it, joined to an ardent thirst for vengeance for the wrongs they had received, had again revived in a fearful degree the insurrection in the whole provinces of the kingdom not actually in the possession of the imperial troops. The recent appointment of Wellington as generalissimo of the Spanish armies, promised to impart to them a degree of efficiency which they had never previously attained, and to direct them in one uniform plan of operations against the enemy; while the evacuation of more than half, and by far the richest half, of the Spanish territory, proved a still more sensible wound to Napoleon, by depriving him of the means of longer carrying on his favourite system of making war maintain war, and throwing his armies in the Peninsula for their main supplies on the treasury of Paris, already severely drained by the unparalleled expenses of the Russian war.¹

Oct. 12.

¹ Belm. i.
247. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 90.

Memorable as the merits of Wellington had been since the commencement of the Peninsular contest, they were outdone by the shining exploits of this campaign. The secrecy of his preparations, the rapidity and force

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

133.

Wellington's great
merit in
the conduct
of the cam-
paign.

of his strokes, the judicious direction of his attacks, the vast effects which followed from them, all revealed the consummate commander, now for the first time relieved from the load which had oppressed him, and, by the celerity of his movements, and the skilful use of a central position, counterbalancing what would otherwise have been deemed an insurmountable superiority of numbers.

When it is recollected that the English general, with an army which never could bring sixty thousand men into the field, gained these wonderful successes over an enemy who had two hundred and forty thousand effective veteran troops at his disposal, and captured the two great frontier fortresses under the very eyes of two marshals who, as the event proved, could assemble a hundred thousand men for their relief, it is evident that more than fortune or national courage had been at work, and that consummate generalship had come to the direction of tried valour and experienced discipline. The secrecy of the preparations for, and the rapidity of the attack on Ciudad Rodrigo ; the stern resolution of the assault of Badajoz ; the eagle eye which caught the moment of decisive victory at Salamanca ; the strategic skill which separated the armies of the north and centre, and recovered the advantages gained by Marmont on the banks of the Guarena, form so many models of military skill which will ever engage the attention and command the admiration of succeeding generations.

134.
Reaction
upon them-
selves of the
French
mode of
making war.

In truth, however, here, as elsewhere in the great revolutions of the world, moral causes were at the bottom of the change ; and the talents of individual actors intrusted with the direction of the affairs were chiefly conspicuous in the sagacity with which they discerned, and the skill with which they availed themselves of those general impulses to mankind, whose operation, how important soever, was shrouded from the eye of ordinary observers. The more that the memorable history of the Peninsular campaigns is studied, the more clearly will it appear that

it was the oppressive mode in which the French carried on the contest which wrought out their ruin ; and that it was to Napoleon's favourite maxim, that war should maintain war, that we are to ascribe his fall. Not only did this iniquitous system everywhere inspire the most unbounded and lasting hatred at their domination, but it imposed upon his lieutenants and viceroys the necessity of such a separation of their forces, with a view to the permanent levying and collecting of contributions, as necessarily exposed them to the danger of being cut up in detail, and immensely augmented the difficulty of any combined or united operations. The eccentric irruption into Andalusia, when Wellington in Portugal was still unsubdued, is the chief cause to which all the subsequent disasters in Spain are to be ascribed ; and it arose clearly from the necessity of seizing upon hitherto untouched fields of plunder.

The marshals were never weary of expressing their astonishment at the unwise policy which kept their troops detached from each other, and melting away in inglorious warfare in their separate provinces, when the English army retained a central position, menacing alike to them all. But the secret motive of Napoleon in so distributing his force was very apparent. If he brought them into large bodies to wage a united war with the English general, the occupation of many of the provinces would require to be discontinued, the levying of the contributions would cease, and the cost of his armies, hitherto wholly defrayed by Spanish resources, would fall with overwhelming weight on the imperial treasury. Hence arose the dispersion of the armies, the military governments, the jealousies of the marshals, the weakness of the king, the exasperation of the inhabitants, the triumphs of the British, and the loss of the Peninsula. The mighty fabric, based on injustice, reared in rapine, cemented by blood, involved in itself the principles of its own destruction. The very greatness of its power, the wide spread of its

CHAP.
LXVIII.

1812.

135.
Their own
injustice
now recoiled
upon
themselves.

CHAP.
LXVIII.1812.

extension, only accelerated the period of its fall. All that was wanting was an enduring enemy, that had discernment enough to see, and talent adequate to improve, the chances thus arising in his favour, and a position where a sure refuge might be found till the period of reaction should arrive. The constancy of England presented such a foe, the eye of Wellington constituted such a commander, and the rocks of Torres Vedras furnished such a stronghold.

CHAPTER LXIX.

SKETCH OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE : WAR BETWEEN THE
OTTOMANS AND RUSSIANS. 1808—1812.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the prodigies of European civilisation, and all the lasting benefits which, both in ancient and modern times, the race of Japhet has conferred upon the species, its history will never equal, in the profound interest which it excites in the human breast, and will continue to awaken to the remotest era of existence, that which arises from the contemplation of the EASTERN WORLD. There is to be found the birthplace of the human race; there lie the scenes alike of the earliest and the most brilliant efforts of civilisation; there the spot on which the fortunes of the whole family of mankind have taken their rise. The greatness of the states of modern Europe may have produced a more durable impression upon the fortunes of the species; the achievements of their intellect may have exalted higher the character of humanity; but they will never awaken so profound an interest as the annals of those states which carry us back to the original separation of nations, and the infancy of mankind. Independent of the interest which naturally attaches to the East, from the sublime events and heart-stirring episodes of which in every age it has been the theatre—independent of the obligations which we owe to it as the birthplace of letters and of figures, of knowledge and of religion—there is something in the simpli-

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

1.
Durable interest of the
Eastern
world.

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

2.

Singular
extremes of
refinement
and simpli-
city which
there ap-
pear.

city of Eastern story, and the pathos of Asiatic incident, which must ever reach the inmost recesses of the human heart.

Although the human race have existed longer there than in any other part of the globe; although wealth exhibited its earliest prodigies on the plain of Shinar, and commerce first began with the march of the camels through the Syrian deserts; yet society has always worn a more romantic and interesting form in the Eastern than in the Western world. The extremes of civilisation and simplicity, of wealth and poverty, of grandeur and humility, have from the infancy of the world been there brought into close proximity with each other. The splendour of the capital is to be found beside the rudeness of the desert; and the traveller, equally in the days of Herodotus and in the present time, on emerging from the greatest cities, finds himself surrounded by the camels of the children of Ishmael. The whole empires of Central Asia are penetrated in every direction by these nomad tribes. They have, from the remotest ages, formed a distinguishing feature of Asiatic society; and at times have exercised the most important influence on the fortunes of the nations which compose it. Through every subsequent stage of society, nations will recur with interest to these primeval occupations of their forefathers. The scenes, the manners, the imagery of the East, will always form the profoundest chords that can be touched in the human heart; and to the last ages of the world, man, by an indelible instinct, will revert to those regions of his pristine existence with the same interest with which the individual looks back to the scenes of his own infancy.

3.

Present in-
terest and
prospects of
the East.

Nor are the present situation and future destinies of the Oriental states less calculated to awaken the interest alike of the heedless observer of passing events and the contemplative student of the fortunes of mankind. By a mysterious agency, it would appear that the fate of

man, even in the most advanced stages of his progress, is indissolubly united with the Eastern world ; and the present course of events, not less clearly than the whole scope of prophecy, concur in demonstrating that it is there that the great changes calculated to affect the destiny of the species are to be brought about. The course of civilisation, which hitherto has been constantly from east to west, has now to all appearance begun to alter its direction. The vast wave of civilisation is rolling steadily towards the Rocky Mountains ; and its standard will ere long be arrested only by the waters of the Pacific. But the progress of mankind is not destined to be thus finally barred. For the first time since the creation of the species, the stream of improvement has begun to flow in the opposite direction : the British Australian colonies are rapidly sowing the seeds of the European race in the regions of the sun ; and even the sober eye of historic anticipation can now dimly descry the time when the eastern Archipelago and the isles of the Pacific are to be cleared by the efforts of civilised men, and blessed by the light of the Christian religion.

Nor are political events less clearly bringing back the interests and the struggles of civilised man to the pristine scene of his birth. The two great powers which have now in an indelible manner impressed their influence upon the human species—England and Russia—are there slowly but inevitably coming into collision. Constantinople is the inestimable prize which, as it will soon appear, brought the empires of France and Russia into hostility, and led to the overthrow of the greatest efforts of European power by the energy of barbaric patriotism and the force of Asiatic cavalry. The same glittering object has retained the rival powers of Great Britain and Russia in thinly disguised hostility since the fall of Napoleon's power ; while "the necessity of conquest to existence," felt equally by the British empire in India as by the French in Europe, has already impelled the

4.
Political
combina-
tions of
which it is
becoming
the theatre.

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

British battalions, with the usual mixture of success and disaster consequent on such enterprises, over the Himalayan snows. It has turned the stream of victory, for the first time in the annals of mankind, from the shores of the Ganges to the confines of Tartary ; arrayed the sable natives of Bengal as victors, in the cradle of the Mogul power, on the edge of the steppes of Samarcand ; and brought the British battalions, though in an inverse order, into the footsteps of the phalanx of Alexander. Nor is the social condition of Europe in later times less pregnant with indications of those coming events, which from the earliest periods of prophecy have been foreshadowed to mankind. The Jews, that peculiar people whose fate is wound up by supreme agency, alike with the last as the first ages of the world, have risen in the last times to extraordinary power and importance. Already their interests, as the great capitalists of nations, rule the internal policy of England, under the specious guise of free trade and a safe currency ; their influence as the bankers of government is felt in every capital of Europe ; and their power, constantly increasing with the augmentation of wealth, is everywhere in modern Europe, for good or for evil, substituting, as in ancient Rome, the influence of accumulated riches for the old aristocracy of the land.

5.
Wide difference between the structure of society in the East and West.

The structure of society, the condition of mankind, and the causes of human happiness or misery, have always been so different in the eastern from the western world, that it would appear as if a separate character had, from the very outset of their career, been imprinted by the finger of Providence on the various races of mankind. The children of Shem, the dwellers in the tents of the East, are still as widely separated from the descendants of Japhet as when the superior vigour of the European family impressed upon the Roman poet the belief, that to their iron race alone it was given to struggle with the difficulties of humanity, and unfold the secrets

of nature.* Their joys, equally with their sorrows, their virtues and their vices, their triumphs and their reverses, the sources of their prosperity and the causes of their ruin, are essentially distinct in these two sections of the globe ; while the peculiarities of the third great family of mankind are still so strongly marked, that there is little reason to believe that it will ever be able to emerge from a state of submission and servitude ; and that the prophecy will hold good equally in the last as in the first ages of the world—" God shall multiply Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." ¹

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

¹ Gen. ix.
27.

Although civilisation has subsisted from the very earliest times among the Eastern nations, and the labours of man have there achieved prodigies of industry far surpassing any which have been reared by the efforts of the Western world ; yet no disposition to resist authority, or assert independent privileges, has ever appeared, even in those situations where, from the assemblage of mankind together in great towns, the chief facilities might be supposed to have existed for the rise of the democratic spirit. Revolts innumerable have occurred, indeed, in every age of Asiatic story ; civil wars without end have desolated, and still desolate, the Eastern plains ; but they have all been brought about by the casual oppression of particular governors, or the mutual hostility of rival candidates for the throne — never by the general resistance of the many to the rule of the few. With the termination of this unbearable oppression, or the ascent of the throne by the successful com-

6.
Constant
submission
to authority
in the East.

* " Audax Iapeti genus
Ignem fraude malâ gentibus intulit.
Post ignem æthereâ domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors.

Nil mortalibus arduum est ;
Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitiâ."

HORACE, *Carmina*, lib. i. ode 3.

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

petitor, all thoughts even of resistance have passed away from the minds of the people. The commercial cities of Asia Minor, which acquired republican ideas and resisted the authority of Darius, were all of European origin, and evinced, in their character and institutions, the European spirit. No attempt to organise a system of popular resistance to encroachment, such as in every age of European history, alike in ancient and modern times, has formed the great and deserving object of public effort, ever was thought of in the East. From the earliest times to the present moment, the whole oriental world have been strangers alike to the elastic vigour, the social progress, and the democratic contentions of the European race. It is not sufficient to say that they submit now without a thought of resistance to the grossest oppression of their governors, or whomsoever is placed in authority over them. The idea of opposition has never crossed their minds: they have done so without a murmur from the days of Abraham.

7.
Rapid progress of early civilisation in the East.

¹ Gillies's
Greece, v.
89.

Owing to the prodigious fertility of their great alluvial plains, and the unbounded riches of nature which there spring up almost unbidden to the hand of the husbandman, the progress of opulence has always been much more rapid in the eastern than in the western world. In the great plain of Mesopotamia, one-half of which is composed of a natural terrace, sloping down with a gradual declivity from the Euphrates to the Tigris, and the other of a similar slope, inclining the other way, from the Tigris to the Euphrates,¹ the means of irrigation are provided, as it were, ready made by nature to the hand of man. Nothing is required on his part but to convey away into little channels the beneficent stream which, descending in perennial flow from the Armenian snows, and larger in summer than in winter, affords the means of spreading continual verdure and fertility over a soil where vegetation ripens under the rays of a tropical sun. In the Delta of Egypt a level surface of great extent is

annually submerged by the fertilising floods of the Nile, produced by the melting of the snows in the great central chain of Africa; and the principal difficulty of man is to clear out the prodigious luxuriance of vegetation which springs up from the solar warmth, when the waters of the river have regained their natural channel. In the European fields, on the other hand, the productive powers of nature require to be drawn forth and assisted by a long period of human labour. The operations of draining, planting, and enclosing, which are essential to the improvement of agriculture, are the work of centuries; and the vast profits which in the East reward the first and infant efforts of human cultivation, are gained in the West only by the result of the accumulated labour of many successive generations. Agricultural riches, and consequent commercial opulence, spring up at once in the East with the rapidity and luxuriance of tropical vegetation: they are of slow and difficult growth in the West, like the oak and the pine, which arrive at maturity only after the lapse of ages.

But in proportion to the rapidity with which agricultural wealth, like vegetation, thus springs up under the warmth of an Eastern sun, is the fragile nature of the materials of which it is composed, and the seeds of rapid decay which are involved in its structure. The law of nature seems to be of universal application—all that rapidly comes to maturity is subject to as speedy decay—whatever is destined for long duration is of the slowest growth, and of the most tardy development. The early prodigies of oriental civilisation were of no longer duration, in the great year of human existence, than the first fruits of spring amidst the quickly succeeding harvests with which the labours of the natural year are crowned. The seeds of decay were sown with no unsparing hand, from the native corruption of the human heart. They found a soil richly prepared for their growth in the physical ease and natural blessings with which man was sur-

CHAP.
LXIX.

1808.

8.
Proportion-
ate rapid
growth of
corruption.

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LXIX.

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rounded. As quickly as the bounties of nature gave him opulence, did his own vices engender wickedness ; and the history of the East, from the earliest times, exhibits, in Gibbon's words, "the perpetual round of valour, greatness, discord, degeneracy, and decline."

9.
Provision
made for its
correction.

If the extraordinary rapidity of the growth of wealth and civilisation in the Eastern plains is considered, and the rapid development of the germs of corruption in the human heart under the genial influence of prosperity, it will no longer appear any way surprising that corruption and degeneracy should so speedily have spread in the Asiatic monarchies. Perhaps the only circumstance that will attract wonder is, how the human race has ever been able to extricate itself from the vice and weakness thus incident to the very first steps of its progress. It is more than doubtful, indeed, whether, in a state of society where the working classes are universally and invariably obedient, and no spring of improvement or purification is to be found in the efforts of the lower orders for their political elevation, or the struggles of the poor to better their condition, any means of correcting or removing the wide-spread corruption consequent on early prosperity could be found in the bosom of society itself. But these means are provided with unerring certainty in the physical conformation of the Asiatic continent, and the character which permanent causes have indelibly imprinted on the inhabitants of the greater part of that large portion of the globe. It is only in particular districts of Asia, in the plain of Mesopotamia, on the banks of the Ganges, in the fertile fields of China, or in the alluvial flats of Asia Minor, that the natural riches and advantages are to be found which in every age have overspread the earth with the early prodigies of human industry. In by far the greater part of the Asiatic continent, the physical circumstances of mankind are widely different ; and hardship and suffering have imprinted as bold and energetic a character upon the human race, as ease and

opulence have softened and relaxed it in situations blessed with greater natural advantages. It is in the intermixture of these different races of man that the means of continually renovating the human race have been provided.

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"Asia," says Montesquieu, "is distinguished by one remarkable peculiarity: the boldest races of men, and the most effeminate, are placed by Nature in close proximity to each other." This peculiarity arises from the physical conformation of the Asiatic continent. The elevated steppes of Tartary, the arid deserts of Arabia, touch, as it were, the fertile plains of Mesopotamia or Armenia: the ruthless Affghans border on the patient Hindoos. The children of the desert are ever at hand, to punish the vices and obliterate the corruptions of the cities of the plain. Alike in the northern as in the southern portions of Asia, in the cold steppes of Tartary, as in the burning deserts of Arabia, a race of men have existed from the earliest times, on whom hardship and difficulty have eternally imprinted the same bold and daring qualities. Differing in no respect from their earliest ancestors, the children of Ishmael are still to be found in the deserts of Arabia, poor, sober, and enduring. Mounted on their steeds, or seated on their camels, they seek a scanty subsistence amidst sterile gravel or arid sands, and preserve pure, on a rocky soil, and under the rays of a vertical sun, the simplicity and the energy of patriarchal life. Still, as in the days of Cyrus, the pastoral nations of the north wander over the vast table-lands of Tartary, multiplying with the herds and flocks which graze around them, and possessing, even to profusion, those hosts of horses which in every age have constituted the strength of the Scythian tribes.*

10.
In the en-
ergy of the
Tartar and
Arabian
tribes.

* Among the Tartars to the north of the great range of the Caucasus, there is hardly an individual so poor as not to possess thirty or forty horses: the luxury of the great consists almost entirely in the number of these animals, whose support on these boundless grassy wilds costs nothing: and many of the chiefs possess three or four thousand steeds.—MALTE-BRUN, i. p. 172.

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11.

Which provide the means of continual renovation of corrupted society.

It is in the undecaying vigour and ceaseless multiplication of these nomad tribes that the means of the continual renovation of the human race in the Asiatic empires has been provided. As certainly as the wealth of the plain produces corruption, the hardihood of the north engenders rapacity; and the effeminate monarchies of the East have, in every age, fallen before the daring rovers of the Scythian wilds, or the fierce Bedouins of the Arabian deserts, with the same certainty that the timid herds of inferior animals perpetually become the prey of the savage lords of the wilderness. The barbarian conquerors, when they settle in the opulent regions of civilisation, in the course of a few generations become as corrupted as the nations they have conquered; but, nevertheless, a certain impulse has been communicated to human vigour, and the extraordinary degeneracy of the seats of opulence is purified, for a season at least, by the infusion of barbarian energy. And when they in their turn, or their descendants, yield from the same causes to the same vices, the same means of regeneration are at hand. Renewed wealth again attracts barbaric rapacity, and a fresh inroad of northern energy restores the fallen dignity of the species.

12.

Example of this in the conquests of Timour.

The provision made by nature for the easy and effectual passage of huge bodies of the Tartar tribes constitutes one of the most extraordinary features of the Asiatic continent, and in every age has been productive of the most important effects on the history of its nations. Gibbon has told how the immediate cause of the overthrow of the Roman empire was the vigour and ability of the Chinese emperors, who, pressing on the Tartar tribes in the north-eastern extremity of Asia, forced them on the central districts of Tartary, and at length impelled the movable wave on the decayed frontiers of the Roman empire. In the prodigious extent of pasture lands, capable of furnishing supplies of food for the greatest armies, is to be found the cause of this

astounding phenomenon. It is narrated by the historian of Timour, that that great warrior, in one of his expeditions from Samarcand against China, marched five months, at the head of four hundred thousand horsemen, constantly in a north-eastern direction, during the whole of which time this immense body of men obtained food by hunting, and the milk of the mares which followed their squadrons, while the horses subsisted on the grass which they were traversing. And of the terrific nature of the devastation which such a horde of barbarians makes when they approach the cities of civilised opulence, some idea may be formed from what occurred when the same conqueror drew near to Bagdad. The trembling inhabitants of that city, aware of the near proximity of the Tartar host, were anxiously straining their eyes in the north-eastern direction, where they were first expected to appear, when the low hills which skirt the Tigris in that direction suddenly became covered with a confused multitude of men and horses, stretching on either side as far as the eye could reach.¹

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¹ Petit La-
croix, Vie
de Timour,
ii. 47.

Wave after wave rolled onwards during the whole day, like the rising tide on the sands of the ocean, until they arrived at the banks of the Tigris, which they required to cross before the city could be reached. That broad and deep stream, however, did not for a moment arrest the Scythian host. Impelled alike by the near prospect of plunder, and the imperious commands of Timour, the foremost squadrons plunged into the river; the Tartar horses easily stemmed the current, and the dripping squadrons were in a few minutes seen pursuing their march on the western bank. Band after band of the immense multitude plunged in with ceaseless vigour; numbers were crushed to death or drowned by the throng, but still those in front were pushed on by the huge mass behind, until, as with the white ants, a bridge was almost formed across the river by the dead bodies of their comrades.² Without a moment's intermission, how-

13.
Extraordi-
nary capture
of Bagdad
by his host.

² Petit La-
croix, Vie
de Timour,
ii. 47, and
iii. 184.
Price's His-
tory of the
Mahomme-
dan Empire,
iii. 361, 366.

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ever, the passage was continued, the town, closely besieged, was soon after stormed ; the greatest part of its inhabitants were put to the sword ; and when Timour left Bagdad in quest of a new theatre of devastation, he left a hundred and twenty pyramids in different parts of the city, each containing a thousand heads, to show where his sabre had been.

14.
System of
oriental
govern-
ment, and
descent of
the throne.

The system of government in the East, from the earliest times, has been the same. We have no need to turn to modern travellers for a picture of the social system ; it is to be found sketched out in the books of the Old Testament, and faithfully portrayed in the pages of Xenophon and Herodotus. Rank and authority are everywhere personal only : power is annexed to office, not to families ; it depends for its establishment and continuance wholly on the will of the sovereign. The throne itself is seldom found to follow the hereditary line of descent : the natural attachment of mankind to the families of their benefactors has commonly, for several generations, secured its continuance in the members of the family of a first founder of an empire ; but no regular principle of succession has been followed, and the most energetic and audacious, whether of legitimate or illegitimate birth, has usually, without opposition, seized the diadem. The people, with that disposition to passive submission which in every age has characterised the inhabitants of Asia, submit without a murmur to a change of dynasty. The victor, generally after a single battle, is instantly saluted as sultaun by all the satraps and cities of the empire ; the stroke of fate is implicitly acquiesced in by all ; and the descendants of a family which have enjoyed the throne for centuries, are consigned without regret to the obscurity from which they sprang, and speedily lost among the multitudes of humble life. No parallel is to be found to this system of government, if it is not in that which necessity, after a century of suffering from civil dissension, imposed on ancient Rome, and to which, from the

same cause, democratic fervour is evidently impelling the nations of modern Europe.

The same instability and precarious tenure of power are to be found in a still greater degree among the inferior depositories of authority. If the chances of victory, or the mutability of fortune, seat or unseat a dynasty on the throne, the favour of a sultaun, the caprice of a minister, or the accidents of success, still more rapidly place or displace the rulers in the cities and the governors in the provinces. The mutations of fortune, which from the earliest ages have existed in the East, appear incredible to those who have been accustomed to the more stable order of things in the western world. The extraordinary adventures, the sudden elevations and as sudden depressions of human life portrayed in the Arabian Nights, are not the brilliant creations of oriental fancy; they are the faithful picture of the continually occurring vicissitudes of life in the eastern world. A barber may there any day become a vizier; a vizier, if he escapes the bowstring, may often esteem himself happy if he can become a barber.

The education of all classes is the same; for this simple reason, that none can foresee with tolerable certainty any material difference in their destiny in life. Nothing is more common than to see, as chief ministers of the sultaun, men who had formerly been trained to the humble duties of street porters: a shoemaker sometimes becomes the high admiral of the Turkish fleet. The descent from greatness is often still more rapid than the ascent. Wealth attracts envy, and cupidity on the throne seldom fails to find pretexts for confiscating the riches, the fruit of connived-at plunder. When the inevitable hour arrives, the victim of imperial cruelty or vengeance submits to the stroke of fate; the ruler of millions of subjects, the master of thousands of soldiers, quietly stretches out his neck to the bowstring; his exorbitant possessions, the object of so much envy, are confiscated to the treasury, or handed

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15.

Precarious
tenure of
inferior
authority.

16.

Identity in
the educa-
tion, and
similarity
in the pros-
pects, of all
classes.

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over to a more fortunate successor ; and his children ere long are found labouring with their hands in the fields, carrying water in the streets, or bearing lances as private soldiers in the ranks of their father's successor.

17.
Rapid
growth and
ephemeral
duration of
wealth and
greatness.

Improvement, and the spread of opulence in Europe, are the slow growth of successive generations, each of which has added something to the national wealth, or made some additions to the public rights. The virtues or the vices, the weakness or the energy, of the sovereign on the throne, though by no means unimportant elements in the national fortunes, seldom produce a decisive influence on the destinies of the state. The public tranquillity depends on the bravery and virtue of the higher ranks ; the public opulence upon the industry and frugality of the lower. But in the East almost everything turns upon the energy, the talents, and activity of the sovereign on the throne. If he is possessed of martial qualities and shining abilities, the fortunes of the state are speedily raised to the very highest point of elevation ; if he is sunk in indolence, or lost in the pleasures of the harem, external disaster and internal dilapidation as speedily ensue. The vigour of a great monarch, wielding the despotic powers of government, speedily makes itself felt in every department. Order is maintained by the satraps and governors of provinces, each trembling for the preservation of his own authority ; industry and property are protected among the poor ; multitudes flock from the adjoining states, to share in the protection of vigour and justice ; warriors crowd from all quarters to follow the standards of victory and plunder. Internal triumph, external success, thus rapidly accumulate round the empire of energy and courage ; and the immense movable or floating population of Asia speedily causes an extraordinary influx of inhabitants into the principal cities of the empire. The whole history of the East, from the earliest ages, is made up of the successive elevations of dynasties or individuals by the efforts of the

possessors of the throne, and their as uniform decline, and ultimate extinction, from the degeneracy and effeminacy of their unworthy successors.

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In Europe, alike in ancient and modern times, a great degree of stability has been communicated to the acquirements of civilisation, the conquests of power, and the accumulation of wealth; and although the progress of nations has been interrupted by casual vicissitudes of fortune, yet a long period of prosperity and greatness has been imparted to national existence, and its decline has been owing to a succession of causes which have gradually undermined, and at last dried up the sources of prosperity. But in the East a very different progress presents itself. The rise of power, the growth of civilisation, the marvels of opulence, have always been far more rapid than in the western world; but, on the other hand, the catastrophes to which they have been subject have been also much more rapid, and the degeneracy by which they have been undermined infinitely more swift in its progress. Though the voice of reason, matured by the lessons of experience, cannot as yet affirm that the European communities, with all their advantages of religion and knowledge, have eradicated from their bosom the seeds of mortality, it may with confidence be affirmed, that as they have been slower of growth, so they will be more durable in existence than the oriental dynasties; and that the causes of decline, common to humanity, have been combated in the western by far stronger principles of vigour and renovation than have ever appeared in the eastern world.

18.
Principles
of vigour
more power-
ful in
Europe than
in the East.

But, for the same reason, corruption, when it does spread through the vitals of the state, will be more deeply rooted in Europe than in Asia; and if degeneracy does overtake society in its last stages, it will be far more universal in the West than in the East. Nothing is so remarkable in the Asiatic states as the simplicity of manners and habits which prevails beyond the pale of those

19.
And those
of corrup-
tion also.

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who actually enjoy the transitory wealth or power which are the consequence of the sultaun's favour. That *they* speedily are corrupted by the possession of wealth, and that the descendants even of the bravest men become, in a few generations, so utterly degenerate as to be incapable of contributing anything to the defence of the state, may be considered as decisively proved by every period of Asiatic history. But the great bulk of the people, as they share in none of the advantages of wealth and power, so they have at no period been generally affected by its corruptions. If a traveller enters an Asiatic town, he finds the manners of the people and simplicity of domestic life nearly as they appear in the sacred records and the early narrative of Herodotus. In Europe, on the other hand, as political power and opulence have descended far more generally through all classes of society, and communicated in consequence, during the periods of public virtue, a far greater degree of durability and vigour to political prosperity ; so the seeds of corruption, when they do spread, will be in proportion more generally diffused, and degeneracy, when it reaches the middle ranks, more universal and hopeless.

20.

Ruinous
effects of
polygamy,
which yet
are confined
almost en-
tirely to
the great.

Polygamy is, and ever has been, a dreadful evil in the East ; and the extraordinary rapidity with which all races of its conquerors have degenerated, in a few generations after their establishment in the subdued districts, has been doubtless mainly owing to this ruinous institution, which, among the great and affluent, poisons the sources of manhood and energy in the cradle. The Scythian chief himself was bred up amidst his herds and his flocks : wandering on horseback from morning till night, he acquired vigour from habit, and hardihood from necessity. His degenerate offspring, after his conquests had been completed, nursed in the seclusion of the harem, surrounded by women, wealth, and flattery, sensual, capricious, and tyrannical, could hardly be recognised as the offspring of such a parent. But polygamy, with all its attendant train

of ills—fawning eunuchs, fiery passions, luxurious seraglios, female jealousy, and sensual corruption—never has, and never can be, a vice of the great body of the people. Necessity, the strongest of all laws, will, in every age and part of the world, confine men to a single wife: the cost of several, or of a train of concubines, is so great, that, like a stud of hunters or race-horses in England, it is altogether beyond the reach of the vast majority of mankind. By leading to the speedy corruption of the higher ranks, this ruinous institution may indeed, and always does, exercise a fatal influence on the *national* fortunes; but its effect on general manners, domestic purity, or the progress of population, is very inconsiderable. In none of these respects, perhaps, is it so powerful an instrument of corruption as the female profligacy and promiscuous concubinage, which, comparatively cheap in its acquisition, and therefore pervading all ranks, is felt as so consuming an evil in all the great cities of western Europe.

As no protection, in any age or in any country of Asiatic history, has existed in the spirit of freedom which pervaded the middle or lower classes, or in the bulwarks which they have constructed against the tyranny of the sovereign, human industry might have been almost destroyed, and the human race become wellnigh extinct in many of its most favoured regions, in consequence of the constant oppression of arbitrary power, or the periodical inroads of the Scythian cavalry, if it were not for three circumstances, eminently characteristic of eastern civilisation, which in every age have formed the principal sources of protection to oriental industry. I. The first of these is the institution of the village communities, which has been already dwelt on in treating of the condition of the people in India,¹ and which prevails generally throughout almost every part of the East. Society there appears in its very simplest form. A certain district around a village belongs in common to all its inhabitants. Some are employed in the cultivation of the soil, and with their

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21.

Causes of decay compensated by other circumstances. The establishment of village communities.

¹ *Ante*, ch. xlvii. 19.

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surplus produce maintain the other classes of the little society—among whom the different trades of blacksmiths, carpenters, bricklayers, masons, barbers, bakers, tailors, shoemakers, and others, are divided,—each member of which is bound in his own profession to contribute, sometimes by money, at others by a return in kind, to the wants of the other members of the community. The general tax, or other tribute, which is imposed upon the whole, is levied by certain persons chosen by all the members, who allocate with great nicety the share of the burden upon each individual, charge themselves with its collection, and account for it to the pasha or other collector of the revenue.

22.
Strong attachment of
the people
to them.

The attachment of the people to these little commonwealths is so strong as to be almost inextinguishable. If the members of it are dispersed by foreign violence, it is perpetuated from generation to generation ; the ancient landmarks are preserved ; even the sites of the different cottages are imprinted on their memories, and handed down to their children ; and if happier times return, and the dispersed community or their descendants can reassemble, they rebuild their fallen walls, and each family lights its fire as nearly as possible on the hearth of its ancestors. But if this village system operates as a protection to the community during prosperous, it comes to press often with dreadful severity in adverse times. The government will rarely, if ever, remit anything of the fixed tribute from the community ; the weight of the exaction thus often comes to fall upon declining numbers ; and so grievous does the burden become when the numbers in the community are seriously impaired by sickness or the sword, that the remaining members fly to the desert or the mountains, and the entire depopulation of the country ensues. It is to this cause that both Gibbon and Sismondi ascribe the rapid decline of the human species, in the rural districts of the Roman empire ;¹ and the same circumstance is considered by recent observers

¹ Gibbon, ii.
313, 319.
Sismondi,
iii. 232.

as the cause of the marked decrease of the population in the contemporary states of Turkey and Persia.

II. The next circumstance which has contributed to soften the weight of despotism in the East is the institution of *ayans*, and the corporate privileges which belong to the members of the different trades in the towns. The former of these are officers appointed by the people to watch over the interests of the cultivators, and shield them from the oppression of the pashas ; the latter are the rights which members of the different trades in towns enjoy, and which interpose, between the individual and the oppression of the tax-collector, the important shield of a community having a common interest with himself. Where the ayans do their duty, they are frequently of essential service ; and they have, in every age, delayed the ruin of many provinces. But they are often in league with the pashas, and are bribed by the wealth which his extortion has produced to connive at still further enormities. The most effectual security, in consequence, is found to be the incorporating of trades in towns ; and hence the observation so common in the East, that industry in the towns is much better protected than in the rural districts, and that the numbers of their inhabitants are often stationary, or even increasing, amidst the desolation and ruin of the fields of the country.¹

¹ Volney, ii.
87. Olivier,
i. 201, 219.

III. The principal protection of the rural population, in unsettled and disastrous times, is to be found in the security which hill-fastnesses have afforded to the industry of the people. Mountain ridges of prodigious height and vast extent run through the East in almost every direction. Independent of the great ranges of the globe, the Caucasus and Himalaya, numbers of considerable mountain ranges branch out from these huge chains in many different directions ; and in their valleys the industry of the cultivators is comparatively undisturbed by the exactions of the pashas, or the plunder of the janissaries. Water, also, that indispensable requisite to cultivation over almost

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all the East, is generally to be had in comparative abundance from the mountain torrents of these alpine regions; and wherever it can be carried, the green field, the flowery orchard, and the smiling cottage, bespeak the residence of happy and industrious man. The rural population, accordingly, in many of the great mountain chains of the East—that of the Bulgarians among the wooded and thickly peopled heights of the Balkan; of the Druses and Maronites on the terraced slopes, or beneath the alpine cliffs of Lebanon; and of the inhabitants of Mount Taurus, beside the clear streams and among the wooded valleys of Asia Minor—often exhibit a degree of general felicity to which hardly a parallel is to be found in any other part of the globe. The cavalry of the pashas is unable to penetrate these rocky dells or wooded recesses; the stern valour of the mountaineers guards the entrance to these asylums of industry and innocence; the demands of government are commuted into a fixed tribute from the district; land is almost always subdivided among the cultivators; and every man, on his little freehold, enjoys undisturbed the fruits of his toil.¹

¹ Volney, ii. 18, 74, 218.
Mariti, ii. 34.
Slade, ii. 38.

25.

Immense number and skill of the horsemen in the East.

The great strength of the East, in every age, has been found to consist in the multitude and admirable dexterity of its horsemen; and this arises from the number of nomad tribes, who, in almost all Asiatic states, pervade the greater part of its territory. Constantly on horseback, these wandering tribes have attained a proficiency in the care and management of that noble animal, unknown in any other part of the world. Their number in the Persian monarchy alone is near a million; those in Asiatic Turkey are still more numerous.² Nor is the high estimation of horses confined to those who still adhere to the roving habits of their forefathers; it pervades the whole community, and descends to the very humblest and most indigent classes of the people. A beggar in Arabia asks charity mounted, with his family, on several horses; the luxury of the great consists in the number and high

² Malte-Brun, i. 301, ii. 107, 110.

breeding of their studs. The Tartar chiefs to the north of Persia have often three or four thousand steeds for their private property; and the poorest man in their tribe is master of three or four. Uniting the blood of the Arab to the strength of the Tartar horse, these incomparable animals will convey their riders on a predatory excursion of a thousand miles in ten days,* carrying with them the scanty provender necessary for crossing the desert which separates them from civilised regions as they go forth, and bearing the ample spoil which their daring masters have amassed on their return. The Asiatic lives with his horse; his children play with it from their mutual infancy; the attachment on both sides grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength; and when he has arrived at the full maturity of his powers, the noble Arab steed, endued almost with human sagacity, and fraught with more than human devotion, will die in the strenuous effort to save the playfellow of his infancy from captivity or death.†

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* I had this extraordinary fact from my accomplished friend Sir John McNeill, so well known and distinguished in the eastern diplomacy of Great Britain.

† A most moving incident, illustrative of the extraordinary strength as well as attachment of the Arab horses, is given by Lamartine in his *Travels in the East*.

"An Arab chief, with his tribe, had attacked in the night a caravan of Dumas', and plundered it: when loaded with their spoil, however, the robbers were overtaken on their return by some horsemen of the Pasha of Acre, who killed several and bound the remainder with cords. In this state of bondage they brought one of the prisoners, named Abou el Marck, to Acre, and laid him, bound hand and foot, and wounded as he was, at the entrance to their tent, as they slept during the night. Kept awake by the pain of his wounds, the Arab heard his horse's neigh at a little distance, and being desirous to stroke for the last time the companion of his life, he dragged himself, bound as he was, to his horse, which was picketed at a little distance. 'Poor friend,' said he, 'what will you do among the Turks? You will be shut up under the roof of a khan, with the horses of a pasha or an aga; no longer will the women and children of the tent bring you barley, camel's milk, or *dourra* in the hollow of their hand; no longer will you gallop free as the wind of Egypt in the desert; no longer will you cleave with your bosom the waters of the Jordan, which cool your sides, as pure as the foam of your lips. If I am to be a slave, at least may you go free. Go: return to our tent, which you know so well; tell my wife that Abou el Marck will return no more; but put your head still into the folds of the tent, and lick the hands of my beloved children.' With these words, as his hands were tied, he undid with his teeth the fetters

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26.

Simplicity
and purity
of domestic
manners.

If the purity of domestic manners be, as it undoubtedly is, the great source both of public grandeur and private happiness, a powerful antidote to the numerous evils by which they are oppressed has in every age been found from this cause in the East. Notwithstanding the immense advantages which Europe has long enjoyed from the energy of its character, the freedom of its institutions, and the superiority of its knowledge, it may be doubted whether the sacred fountain of domestic life has been preserved so pure among the poor and needy of its crowded kingdoms, as in the seclusion of the East. The unrestrained social intercourse of the sexes; the incessant activity which prevails; the close proximity in which the poor men and women in great cities are accumulated together; the general license of manners which has flowed from the liberty that prevails, and the passion for ardent spirits which is so common among the working classes, have produced a far greater degree of general vice and misery in Europe than has ever obtained, at least among the middle and lower ranks, in the East.

27.

Advantages
which the
seclusion of
the harem
has produced
in the East.

The enormous mass of female profligacy which overspreads all our great towns is there almost unknown. From the seclusion of the harem, have, in the middle classes,* flowed purer manners and a more elevated character than has resulted from the constant intermixture of

which held the courser bound, and set him at liberty; but the noble animal, on recovering its freedom, instead of bounding away to the desert, bent its head over its master, and seeing him in fetters and on the ground, took his clothes gently in his teeth, lifted him up, and set off at full speed towards home. Without ever resting, he made straight for the distant but well-known tent in the mountains of Arabia. He arrived there in safety, and laid his master safe down at the feet of his wife and children, and immediately dropped down dead with fatigue. The whole tribe mourned him; the poets celebrated his fidelity: and his name is still constantly in the mouths of the Arabs of Jericho."—LAMARTINE, *Voyage dans l'Orient*, vi. 236. Edit. 1836. This beautiful anecdote paints the manners and the horses of Arabia better than a thousand volumes. It is unnecessary to say, after it, that the Arabs are, and ever will be, the first horsemen, and have the finest race of horses in the world.

* The dreadful evils of polygamy among the rich and powerful, to whom, from its vast expense, it is almost entirely confined, have been already noticed. Among the middle classes it is rare; among the poor, unknown.

the sexes, and the vehement passions to which it gives rise. It is this simplicity and honesty of disposition, joined to the unaffected devotion and martial qualities by which they are distinguished, which has blinded so many European travellers of the highest talents and discernment to the devastating effects of Asiatic government, and the ruinous consequences which have flowed, particularly during the decline of the Persian and Turkish empires, from the weakened authority of the throne, the deplorable contests between the princes of the same family, and the general oppression which the pashas have exercised in the independent sovereignties which they have erected in many of the provinces of these vast empires.*

Encamped for four centuries in Europe, the Turks have deviated in no respect from the manners and customs of their Asiatic forefathers. Although from the day that the cannon of Mahomet the Second opened the breach in the walls of Constantinople, which still exists to attest the fall of the Empire of the East, they have been the undisputed masters of the fairest and richest dominion upon earth, yet the great body of them still retain the primitive customs and habits which they brought with them from the mountains of Koordistan. They have in no respect, until attempted in very recent times, either

28.
Immutable
manners and
customs of
the Turks.

* For the preceding account of the civilisation and manners of the East, the author has relied on the older travels of Olivier, Sonnini, Volney, Chardin, Eton, and De Tott, with the more modern narratives of Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Porter, Fraser, Morier, Walsh, Urquhart, and Slade. The particular references are in general not given on the margin, because they would cover it with too dense an array; and the statements in the text are founded rather upon a comparison of their different accounts, and the conclusions which the author, after much reflection on the subject, has drawn from them, than from any particular passages which specially and to the letter support the statements which he has given. And he hopes that such a summary will not be deemed misplaced, even in a work of European history; the more especially, when the important questions now wound up with the policy of the East are considered, and the intimate connexion which the English nation, both from its national policy and the extent of its oriental dominions, has with the future destinies of that important portion of the globe.

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shared in the improvement, or adopted the manners, or acquired the knowledge of their European neighbours. Their government is still the absolute rule of the sultans and the pashas, the agas and the janissaries; notwithstanding their close proximity to, and constant intercourse with, the democratic commercial communities of modern Europe, they are yet the devout followers of Mahomet; though they everywhere admit that the Crescent is waning before the Cross, they still adhere in all their institutions to the precepts of the Koran; they rely with implicit faith on the aid of the Prophet, although they are well aware that the followers of Christ are ultimately to expel them from Europe, and themselves point to the gate by which the Muscovite battalions are to enter to place the cross upon the dome of St Sophia.

29.
The Mahometan religion is the cause of this tenacity.

A very sufficient reason may be assigned for this inviolable adherence of the Turks to their Asiatic customs, notwithstanding their close proximity to European civilisation, and the innumerable evils which they have suffered from the superiority of the European discipline. Their RELIGION renders them incapable either of alteration or improvement. The Koran contains several admirable precepts of morality, drawn from the sages of antiquity, and many sublime truths borrowed from the Gospel; but in all the parts where it is original, it is either a wild rhapsody, inapplicable to the rest of the world, or a rude code, suited to none but a horde of oriental conquerors. Nevertheless, it forms not only the religious standard of faith, but the civil code of law: the whole decisions of the cadis in Mussulman states are founded on texts of the Koran; all the maxims of the muftis and supreme religious council are drawn, without comment or amplification, from its injunctions.¹ The celebrated saying ascribed to the Arabian conqueror who destroyed the Alexandrian library, "If these books contain the truth, it is already in the Koran, and therefore they are superfluous; if what they contain is not

¹ Malte-Brun, iv. 266, 267.

there, it is false, and therefore they should be destroyed," designates the whole system of their civil and ecclesiastical government.

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Minutely specifying almost all the particulars of government, containing every possible direction for the regulation of the interests of society as it existed around the dwelling of Mahomet, and the cradle of his religion, it is necessarily inapplicable to a different state of society, where separate interests have arisen, and unforeseen passions and difficulties have emerged. All attempts, therefore, at the renovation or regeneration of the Turkish, as of every other Mahometan empire, must necessarily fail, because, before they can be generally adopted, the people must have ceased to be Mahometans; the priests must have ceased to be the expounders of the law; the sway of the Sultaun to be the delegated authority of Mahomet; the Koran to be the supreme code in all matters, civil and religious, from which there is no appeal. This is, with a view to their respective political effects, the grand distinction between the Christian religion and that of Mahomet. Prescribing nothing for external form, enjoining little for ecclesiastical government, studiously avoiding all allusion to political institutions, the Gospel directs all its efforts to the purification of that great fountain of evil—the human heart.

30.
And must
ever render
all attempts
at Turkish
reform
abortive.

Destined in the end to effect powerful changes, both in the dispositions of man, the frame of society, and the powers of government, it aims directly at neither of the latter objects: it is to work out the predicted end, to accomplish the ultimate designs of Providence, by its unobserved influence upon the human heart. The Koran, on the other hand, specifies *every* thing which its disciples are to do, from the division of property among children upon the death of a parent, to the number of daily ablutions to be performed by the faithful. Reform of institutions, or change of manners, therefore, is impossible in a Mahometan state; for it can be attempted

31.
Important
difference in
this respect
of Christi-
anity.

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only at the hazard of destroying the great bond of nationality, Mahometanism itself. It is as impossible as for a child to grow to maturity, who in early youth has been cased in a rigid suit of armour : his figure cannot enlarge unless his fetters are burst. The one faith proposes to reform the heart by the institutions ; the other, to reform the institutions by the heart. Whoever will reflect on this distinction cannot fail to perceive that the one religion, calculated with extraordinary sagacity to produce a great impression, and in some respects improvement, among the Asiatic tribes for whom it was intended, was wholly unfit for the progressive destinies and different circumstances of mankind ; while the other, though producing in the outset a less change in society, from its enjoining no external ceremonial or outward institutions, was adapted for every imaginable state of human progress, and fitted to pour the stream of real regeneration into the human heart to the end of the world.

32.
In the first
instance the
Mahometan
religion
wonderfully
strengthened
Turkey.

But although the Mahometan religion thus opposes an invincible bar to the improvement of the Turkish empire, or the engrafting upon its aged stock of any part of the free institutions of Christian Europe, and renders chimerical all the projects which have been formed in recent times for its political reformation, yet there can be no doubt that, for several centuries after it was established in Europe, the extraordinary strength and formidable power of the Osmanlis were mainly owing to the religious fervour with which its Asiatic inhabitants were inspired. Not only were their conquests effected during the fervour of a new faith, when the Arabians, with the scimitar in one hand and the Koran in the other, poured into all the adjoining states to seek the houris of Paradise in the forcible conversion of the world, but the religious veneration with which the family of the first founder of the empire was regarded, gave a degree of stability to its institutions which has never obtained elsewhere in the East. Alone of all the oriental dynasties, the descen-

dants of the same family have sat upon the throne of Constantinople for four hundred years; and although many irregularities in the choice of the princes and the order of descent have occurred, and many fearful crimes have stained their annals, the throne has always been filled by the descendants of Othman. In this way the Turkish empire has been saved from that perpetual recurrence of civil wars upon every accession, which has ruined the independence or halved the population of her immediate neighbours in Poland and Persia; and without the hereditary succession to the throne having been formally recognised, the Ottoman dominions have substantially obtained most of the benefits of that invaluable institution.

The provinces which fell to the Turks upon the overthrow of the Lower Empire were immense, and embraced perhaps the fairest portion and most delightful regions of the earth. Their empire still extends, notwithstanding the great losses it has sustained in the last seventy years, to eight hundred and fifteen thousand square geographical miles—a surface about nine times that of Great Britain, which contains ninety-one thousand. Although, however, the extent of its surface is so great, and the climate so benign that the plains in general yield thirty or forty, in some places as much as two hundred fold;* although the mountains, cut in terraces, will yield fruits and crops to the height of several thousand feet above the sea—yet the population of the whole empire in Asia and Europe does not at the highest estimate exceed twenty-five, and by the lowest estimate is brought down to eight or nine millions. The largest of these numbers only gives twenty-eight souls to the square mile, and the lower will only yield nine; while England, with far inferior climate and natural advantages, contains now three hundred, and the British islands as a whole, two hundred and

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33.
Extent and
magnitude
of the
Turkish
empire.

—
Atlas,
Plate 72.

* "In the plains of Mesopotamia, near Bagdad, the land, from the effects of irrigation, yields, under a very rude cultivation, *two hundred fold*."—MALTE-BRUN, ii. 117.

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twenty-seven.* More decisive proof cannot be figured of the desolation practically produced by the Turkish government, or of the extent to which the most boundless gifts of nature may be rendered nugatory by the long-continued oppression of oriental tyranny. In fact, it is only in the great towns and mountainous regions of the country that any considerable population is to be seen. Its finest plains are nearly desolate; nine-tenths of Mesopotamia, the garden of the world, capable itself of nourishing forty millions of souls, is an arid or gravelly desert; not a seventh of the rich alluvial soil in Wallachia or Moldavia is cultivated; and the wild grass of nature comes up to the horses' girths, from the gates of Constantinople to the mosques of Adrianople.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, ii.
166, 167.

34.
Its bound-
less natural
advantages.

Yet the world hardly affords so noble a country as that which at this period was still desolated by the sway of the Osmanlis. Bounded by the Euphrates on the east, the Mediterranean or the Libyan deserts on the south, the Adriatic on the west, and the steppes of the Ukraine on the north; containing the isles of Greece, the forests of Macedonia, the cedars of Lebanon, in its bosom; numbering the Nile, the Danube, and the Euphrates among its inland streams; embracing all the nations who fought at Troy among its subjects, all the realms which have enlightened the world among its provinces; giving law at once to Egypt and Jerusalem, to Nineveh and Babylon, to Athens and Constantinople; connected together by a vast inland sea, navigated by hardy and skilful seamen, enjoying hundreds of the finest harbours in the world on its shores; with the vine and the olive clothing its slopes, the orange and the citron loading its isles, the oak and the pine flourishing on its mountains, the maize and the rice waving on its plains—it seemed to enjoy every

* By the census of 1841, the British islands contained 26,860,000 souls, which, spread over their total surface of 122,000 square miles, gives 227 on an average per square mile. In England the proportion is 291, the population being 15,000,000, and the square miles 50,387.

advantage which the bounty of nature could accumulate, to bestow happiness and contentment on the human race. But all these blessings have been blasted by the despotism of the East and the rigidity of the Mahometan rule. Its noble plains were fast relapsing into deserts ; its capacious harbours deserted ; wild beasts were resuming their dominion amidst the ruins of former magnificence ; population, amidst the rapid increase of the European states, was retrograding, and fears were entertained for the extinction of the human race in those realms of boundless riches where the species was first created.^{1*}

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¹ Malte-
Brun, ii.
117.

But amidst the general decay of the Turkish empire, the matchless situation and natural advantages of CONSTANTINOPLE still attracted a vast concourse of inhabitants, and veiled under a robe of beauty the decline of the Queen of the East. This celebrated capital, the incomparable excellence of whose situation attracted the eagle eye of Alexander the Great ; which made the Romans forget the sanctity of the Capitol, and transferred the metropolis of the world to the shores of the Bosphorus ; which rent in twain the dominion of the legions, and yet singly sustained for a thousand years the empire of the East ; which drew aside the crusaders from the storm of Jerusalem, and attracted the Osmanlis from their deserts ; which threatened in one age every monarchy in Europe, and existed in another by their mutual jealousy at its acquisition—had long formed the real object of discord between the courts of Paris and St Petersburg. The desires of the cabinet of St Petersburg had been for above a century fixed on its acquisition ; towards that object all their efforts

35.
Incomparable advantages and beauty of Constantinople.

* Upwards of fifty years ago, fears were entertained of the entire extinction of the human race in the eastern provinces of the Turkish empire.—Eron's *Turkish Empire*, 264. And the same fears are expressed by a more recent observer in regard to some of the western provinces, particularly the plains of Roumelia, Wallachia, and Moldavia.—WALSH'S *Constantinople*, i. 193, 194; and BUCKINGHAM'S *Mesopotamia*, i. 212.

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had, since the days of Peter the Great, incessantly been directed; and it was only by the active interference of England that the total overthrow of the Turkish empire had been averted, on the eve of the revolutionary war, after the fall of Oczakoff. So firmly bent was the Empress Catherine on this splendid acquisition, that she named her eldest grandson Alexander, and his second brother Constantine; hoping that the former would rival the glories of the Macedonian conqueror, and the latter again renew on the Bosphorus the sway of the Cross and the lustre of the Eastern empire.

36.
Long-standing
designs
of Russia
upon it.

During the anxieties and dangers of that dreadful contest, the designs of the cabinet of St Petersburg for the acquisition of Constantinople had for a time been suspended; but its projects, guided by aristocratic foresight, were never forgotten. Even while yet reeking with the blood of Friedland, Alexander turned his anxious attention to the long-cherished projects of his family and court; and Napoleon, bent on the acquisition of Spain for himself, gave a verbal consent, during the conference of Tilsit, to the entire expulsion of the Turks from Europe by the Russians.¹ But Roumelia and Constantinople were excluded from this partition, and their destination left in the dark, even when it was agreed that the Osmanlis should be expelled from all their other possessions in Europe. Napoleon, as he himself has told us, never could bring his mind to consent to the cession of the Queen of the East to his northern rival: it soon afterwards, as will immediately appear, formed the subject of angry contention between them. Combined with jealousy concerning Poland, and the non-observance by Russia of the Continental System, it was one of the real causes of the Russian invasion; and the principal reason which directed the mighty conqueror to Moscow instead of St Petersburg, was the secret project which he entertained of turning his victorious arms, after the subjugation of the Muscovites, to the southward,² and

¹ *Aute*, ch. xlv. § 80.

² *Chamb.* ii. 234.

placing on his victorious brows the diadem of the Eastern empire.*

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37.

Description
of Constantinople
considered in
reference to
the advantages
of situation.

It is not surprising that Constantinople should thus in every age have formed the chief object of human ambition. Placed midway between Europe and Asia, it is at once the natural emporium where the productions of the east and west find their mutual point of contact, and the midway station where the internal water-communication of Europe, Asia, and Africa unite in a common centre. While the waves of the Mediterranean and the Ægean bring to its harbour the whole productions of Egypt, Libya, Italy, and Spain, the waters of the Danube, the Dniester, and the Volga, waft to the same favoured spot the agricultural riches of Hungary, Germany, the Ukraine, and Russia. The caravans of the desert, the rich loads of the camel and the dromedary, meet within its walls; the ample sails and boundless riches of European commerce—even the distant pendants of America and the New World—hasten to its quays, to convey the vast productions of the old to the new hemisphere. An incomparable harbour, where a three-decker can without danger touch the quay, while from its yard-arms a bold assailant may almost leap, like the Venetian Dandolo of old, on the walls, affords, within a deep bay several miles in length, ample room for all the fleets in the world to lie in safety. A broad inland sea, enclosed within impregnable gates, gives its navy the extraordinary advantage of a safe place for pacific exercise and preparation; narrow and winding straits on either side, of fifteen or twenty miles in length, crowned by heights forming natural castles, render this matchless metropolis impregnable to all but land forces. It is the only capital in the world, perhaps, which can never decline as long as

* Napoleon's designs on Constantinople were of old standing, and had constantly occupied his mind since the treaty of Tilsit. Shortly after that peace, when one of the chief persons in his councils spoke on the subject of a general peace, he replied, with a frankness very unusual to him, "A general peace! it will be found only at Constantinople."—CHAMBRAY, ii. 235.

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the human race endures, or the present wants of mankind continue ; for the more that the west increases in population and splendour, the greater will be the traffic which must pass through its gates in conveying to the inhabitants of its empires the rich products of the eastern sun ; and the more that Asia revives or Russia advances in civilisation, the more boundless must be the wealth which will be poured into its bosom by the vast arteries which collect from their plains the boundless streams of their cultivation.

38.
Description
of Constantinople
itself.

Nor is the beauty of Constantinople, and the natural excellence of its situation, inferior to the commercial advantages which, for a thousand years, prolonged the existence of the Byzantine, and now singly compensate the decay of the Turkish empire. The powers of the greatest historical and descriptive painters of England and France have hardly sufficed to portray its varied charms ; and if the pencils of Gibbon and Lamartine have, in it, found materials to crowd successive chapters of their immortal works, a subsequent writer can hardly be expected to do justice to it in a single paragraph. Situated, like Rome and Moscow, on seven hills, but enjoying, unlike them, the advantages of a maritime situation and the refreshing breezes of the ocean—exhibiting in its successive terraces, which rise from the margin of the water, a unique assemblage of European domes, green foliage, and eastern minarets ; with the noble harbour of the Golden Horn, five miles in length, and yet capable of having its mouth closed by a single chain, crowded with all the flags of Europe, lying in its bosom ; and the blue expanse of the sea of Marmora, studded by white sails and light barks, opening in its front—it presents an assemblage of striking points unparalleled in any other quarter of the globe. But great as is the lustre of the capital, it is outdone, to the real lover of the beauties of nature, by the extraordinary variety and richness of the scenery in the channel of the Bosphorus.

There the stream which unites the Euxine to the sea of Marmora winds its devious course for nearly twenty miles through bold headlands and lofty promontories ; one shore of which, resplendent with the smiling villas, umbrageous woods, and hanging gardens of the East, falls so rapidly into the sea, that the acacia dips its branches in the wave, and the sails of the largest merchantmen almost touch the dark green cypresses that crowd the shore. On the opposite coast, the features bear the character of savage magnificence ; the villages bespeak the wildness of oriental manners, the havens the spontaneous bounty of nature ; while such is the depth of the water even close to the shore, that a seventy-four can lie in safety at the foot of the rocks, moored to the root of the lofty evergreen oak, whose branches intermingle with its masts.¹

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¹Lamartine,
Gibbon,
Slade.

The principal strength of the Turks, like that of all other Asiatic nations, has always consisted in their cavalry ; and no nation ever was better provided with light horse. Independent of the nomad tribes of Asia, which, as already mentioned, penetrate its eastern provinces in every direction, the European and Asiatic proprietors, who equally hold their land under the tenure of military service as spahis, furnish at all times a powerful body of admirable cavaliers. Every Turk, and, in fact, almost every oriental, is by nature a horseman. From their earliest infancy they are accustomed to the saddle ; from childhood upwards their horses are their companions ; in youth, their principal exploits and rivalry consist in the management of their steeds ; and in maturer years, all their journeys are performed on horseback. Beyond the distance of a few miles from some of their great towns, there is no such thing as a carriage-way in any part of Turkey. Even the ladies of the harem perform their distant journeys in this manner, or on baskets slung on each side of camels ;² and in the management of the rein and the firmness of their seat,

39.
Admirable
cavalry of
the Turks.

² Valentini,
Guerre des
Turcs, 12,
13.

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40.

The Spahis.

often rival the most accomplished horsemen of western Europe.

There are great varieties, however, in the quality of the Turkish cavalry ; and none are comparable in dexterity and equipment to the spahis, who inhabit the broad and wooded Mount Hæmus. These horsemen, or their sons, are almost all proprietors of the ground ; and they hold their land by the tenure of military service, when called on by the Grand Seignior. Accustomed from their infancy to climb the wooded declivities of their native hills, they early acquire an extraordinary skill and hardihood in the management of their steeds. A spahi will often ride at full gallop up hills, over torrents, through thick woods, along the edge of precipices, or down steeps, where a European cavalier would hardly venture even to walk. This extraordinary boldness increases when they act together in masses. When so assembled, they dash down rocks, scale scaurs, and drive through bushwood in the most surprising manner. No obstacles intimidate, no difficulties deter, no disorder alarms them. The attacks of such bodies are in an especial manner to be dreaded in rugged or broken ground, where European infantry deem it impossible for cavalry to act at all. The heads of two or three horsemen are first seen peeping through the bush-wood, or emerging out of the steep ravines by which the declivities are furrowed. Wo to the battalion or division that does not instantly stand to its arms, or form square on such videttes appearing. In an instant, five hundred or a thousand horsemen scale the rocks on all sides ; with loud cries they gallop forward upon their enemy ; the Turkish scimitar is before their horses' heads, and in a few minutes a whole regiment is cut to pieces.¹

¹ Veterani,
Campagne,
34. Valen-
tini, 12.

41.
Their feudal
militia and
janissaries.

Although, however, the Turkish cavalry constitutes the main strength of their armies, yet they have the command of a very numerous body of foot-soldiers. These originally consisted of the military feudatories, who held their land for service in war, just as the feudal tenants of

Christian Europe did. They constituted the main strength of the Ottoman armies in their best days, and their number was variously estimated at from forty thousand to sixty thousand men. But a new method of recruiting the foot service was adopted by Orkhan, father of the famous Amurath the First, who selected a fifth part of the most robust of the prisoners of the Christian nations, whom he compelled to adopt the Mahometan faith, and from whom, or their sons, he formed a new body of troops called the Yenetcheræ or Janissaries, who soon acquired an extraordinary celebrity in the European wars. Their discipline and mode of fighting was very similar to that of the English light infantry or French tirailleurs. From being constantly embodied, they soon acquired a high degree of perfection and discipline; and at a time when no other power in Europe had a similar force to oppose them, they were wellnigh irresistible. At the siege of Malta, under Solyman the Magnificent, during the reign of Charles the Fifth, and in the repeated invasions of Hungary which took place in that time, till the siege of Vienna in 1683, they were the terror of all Christendom. This favoured body soon came to enjoy so many privileges, and so much consideration, particularly from the privilege of setting up a trade in any town, that great numbers of persons in all parts of the empire enrolled themselves under their banners. Their whole number throughout the empire might amount, at the treaty of Tilsit, to one hundred thousand persons capable of bearing arms, of whom eighteen or twenty thousand were to be found in Constantinople or the adjoining villages. Not more than a third of this number, however, were permanently embodied, except on a particular crisis; but they were all liable to be called on when the service of the state required it; and sixty or seventy thousand excellent soldiers could in this way be arrayed, when any crisis demanded their services, round the standards of the Prophet.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, ii.
133, 134.
Valentini,
14, 15.

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42.

And fellahs,
or ordinary
foot-sol-
diers.

In addition to these regular forces of feudal militia, the Grand Seignior was entitled at any time to call out the whole Mahometan population in his dominions capable of bearing arms ; and although such an array, often hastily brought together, and always undisciplined, would not in any European nation have been formidable, yet it was by no means to be despised, from the peculiar habits of the Ottomans. In consequence of the troubled state of the country, and the great pride which they take in costly weapons, every Turk is accustomed to the use of arms. They are in general adepts in the management of the gun, the pistol, the scimitar, and the lance. Being almost all either sturdy cultivators or hardy cavaliers, they are equally ready for the foot or the horse service ; and, what was wholly unknown in any other army, an officer might, with perfect security, at any time put a janissary on horseback, or enrol a spahi among the companies of foot-soldiers. The Turkish artillery was long superior to that of the European powers ; and although it has not kept pace with the progress of western science, and had sunk from its former celebrity during the wars of the eighteenth century, yet it was still formidable from the great number of guns which their armies brought into battle, and the rapidity with which their admirable horses moved them from one part of the field to another.¹

¹ Val. 13,
14.

42.

Cause of the
decay of the
Turkish
military
force.

An empire possessing military resources of this description, while animated by the spirit of religious zeal, and held together by the bond of successful plunder, was a most formidable object of apprehension to the Christian powers. On many occasions it was only by the most strenuous efforts, and a union among the western powers that could hardly have been expected, that Christendom was saved from Mahometan subjugation. But religious zeal, and the lust of conquest, though two of the most powerful passions which ever rouse the human breast, cannot be relied on for permanent efforts. The first generally burns so fiercely that it extinguishes itself after

a few generations ; the second, dependent on the excitement of worldly desires, is kept alive almost entirely by the continuance of worldly success. The vicious institutions and wasting tyranny of the Turkish empire were incapable of furnishing that steady support to military power which originated with the hereditary aristocracy and free spirit of western Europe. The Christians had at first the utmost difficulty in stemming the torrent of Asiatic invasion ; and the destinies of the world never, perhaps, hung so nicely balanced as when Charles conquered the Saracens on the field of Tours, or when John Sobieski raised the siege of Vienna with the Polish lances. But these two memorable battles, by stopping the career of conquest, and cooling the ardour of fanaticism in the ranks of the Mahometans, proved fatal to their cause both in western and eastern Europe. Disaster never ceased to succeed disaster, till, though after the lapse of many centuries, the arms of the Moors were forced backward from the banks of the Loire across the Straits of Gibraltar ; and the jealousy of the European powers, excited by the inestimable prize of Constantinople, alone has prevented them, long before this time, from driving the Turks across the Bosphorus into their native seats in the deserts of Asia.

During the decline of the Ottoman empire, which has now continued to recede for a hundred and fifty years, they have, however, maintained many long and bloody wars, both with the Austrians and Russians ; and the tenacity with which they still hold their territory, and the vigour with which they have so often risen from shocks which seemed fatal to their cause, prove what powerful elements of strength exist in the courage and energy of the Turkish population to resist so many external disasters, and the more unobserved but fatal influence of such long-continued internal oppression. This tenacity of life is the more remarkable, when it is recollected that everywhere a half, in some places two-thirds, of the

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44.
Varied population of which this empire is composed.

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whole population of the empire are Christians ; and that nations and sects of all imaginable varieties compose the motley array of the inferior classes of the Ottoman empire. The merchants are almost all Greeks or Armenians ; the sailors, islanders from the Archipelago ; the money-lenders, Jews ; the watermen and cultivators, generally the descendants of the inhabitants of the old Greek empire. Three millions of Turks in Europe, and perhaps four millions in their Asiatic dominions—hardly more than a half, perhaps not a third, of the whole inhabitants—not only retain all this varied population in entire subjection, but compel them to labour for their support, and to pay taxes to their government : a fact which, however surprising, is thrown into the shade by the still more wonderful sway maintained by a much smaller number of British over the immense population of the Indian peninsula.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, ii.
137.

45.
Turkish
fortresses.

The fortresses of Turkey are far from being worthy of respect, if the construction of their ramparts is alone taken into consideration ; but they become most formidable strongholds from the manner in which they are defended by the Mussulman population. They have no idea of bastions or covered ways, nor of one rampart enfilading another, nor of the system of outworks, which form the strength of modern fortifications. Brahilow, Widdin, and Belgrade, which possess these advantages, have all owed them to the Christian powers which at different times have had them in their hands. The real Turkish fortresses, such as Silistria and Roudschouck, on the Danube, are merely towns surrounded by a lofty wall, in front of which runs a deep ditch. Here and there a few round towers or bastions form so many salient angles, but they are of no other use than to mount a few cannon. On the top of the wall is placed a row of gabions, with embrasures for guns, behind which the besieged are completely screened from the fire both of artillery and musketry ; and at short distances are loop-

holed guard-houses, from which they keep up a destructive fire on the assailants. Subterraneous passages are worked under the ramparts, by which they are enabled to fill the lower part of the ditch above the water with musketeers, who often prove extremely fatal during an assault. The strength of the Turkish fortifications, therefore, does not consist in the solidity of the works, or their scientific construction ; but the obstinacy of their defence often renders them more formidable obstacles than the most regular ramparts of western Europe.¹

¹ Val. 62,
63.

46.
Causes of
their resolu-
tion in de-
fending
them.

A very sufficient reason may be assigned for the resolute manner in which the Ottomans defend their walls : it is necessity. The Grand Seignior makes no distinction between misfortune and pusillanimity. The bowstring in general awaits alike the victim of superior power and the betrayer of patriotic duty ; and such is the inveteracy with which war has long been carried on between the Mussulman and Christian powers, that all the inhabitants are well aware that death or captivity awaits them if the town is carried by assault, or even surrendered by capitulation. Thus their only chance of safety is in the most resolute resistance. Thirty thousand persons, of whom one-half were inhabitants of the town, perished in the assault of Ismael in 1789 : fifteen thousand were made prisoners, and for the most part sold as slaves, or transported into the country of the conqueror. Thus the terrible maxim of ancient war, *væ victis*, is constantly before the eyes alike of the citizens as of the garrisons of Turkish fortified towns ; and as the calamity involves alike persons of all religions who are found within the devoted walls, it unites all persuasions, Christians, Jews, and Mussulmans, in one common and cordial league against the ruthless assailants.²

² Val. 63,
65.

The assault of the rampart is generally considered in Western Europe as the termination of a siege ; many brave commanders have deemed their duty sufficiently discharged, when they held out till the breach was prac-

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47.

Desperate
Turkish
defence of
the breaches
of fortified
towns.

ticable ; and even the more rigorous code of military duty established by Napoleon only required one assault to be withstood. In Turkey, on the other hand, the mounting of the breach is but the beginning of the serious part of the defence. The Turks seldom disquiet themselves about retarding the approaches of the besiegers : frequently do not return a shot to the breaching batteries ; let the ruined part of the rampart take its chance ; but bend their whole efforts to the preparation of the means of defence against the assaulting columns who get in by that entrance. For this purpose every ledge, roof, window, and wall, which bears upon the approach to the breach, or the space inside of it behind the rampart, is lined with musketeers ; and columns are arranged on either side of the opening within the wall, to assail the enemy when, disordered by the tumult of success, he has descended into the interior of the place. In the deadly strife which then ensues, the equipments and skill in the use of arms of the Turks generally prove superior to the discipline of the Europeans : in personal contests the bayonet is no match for the scimitar, at least when wielded by the janissaries. Every Turk, besides his musket, has a pair of pistols, a sabre, and slightly-curved poniard, two feet long, of fearful efficacy in combats hand-to-hand ; and they have all been accustomed almost daily to the use of these arms from their infancy. It may readily be conceived that when the Christian columns, armed only with the bayonet, out of breath and disordered by the rush and ascent of the breach, find themselves suddenly assailed in front and on both flanks by such antagonists so armed, it is seldom indeed that they can come off victorious ; and in fact it would never so happen, were it not that the Ottomans, though constitutionally brave, are sometimes seized with unaccountable panics, which lead them to take to flight at a time when the means of victory are still in their power.¹

¹ Val. 62, 63.

The long-established and often-experienced superiority

1808.

48.

Mode of
warfare by
the Rus-
sians against
the Turks.¹ *Ante*, ch.
xxviii. § 47.

of the Ottoman cavalry early led to a very peculiar organisation and array of the Russian armies by whom they were to be opposed. Squares of infantry were soon found to be the only effectual mode of resisting the attacks of that fiery and redoubtable horse, and for a considerable time these squares consisted of the whole army, which was drawn up in one solid column, like the corps of Korsakoff at Zurich, in 1799.¹ It was in a great degree owing to this defective organisation that Peter the Great was reduced to such extremities on the Pruth in the early part of the eighteenth century. But it was at length discovered that, under such an arrangement, the greater part of the Christian host was kept in crowded ranks, in a state of perfect inefficiency; and therefore the more eligible plan was adopted of forming lesser squares, none of which were composed of more than twelve battalions. These squares had their artillery at the corners, the officers were in the centre, the cavalry outside, but ready to be withdrawn into the interior if necessary; and the masses were placed at such distances, in an angular position towards each other, that the enemy's horse were generally exposed, on penetrating between them, to a fire on each flank; just as the Mamelukes were, by a similar arrangement on Napoleon's part, at the battle of the Pyramids. At the battle of Kagul in 1770, the Russians had five of these squares; and at the affair of Schumla, on the 30th June 1774, Romanzoff advanced to the attack of the Turks in the same formation.²

More recently, however, and since discipline has so much improved in the Muscovite ranks, the ordinary system is to advance, as is usual against other troops, in open columns, from whence it is easy to form squares when the enemy are at hand. The constant habit of combating in this manner, and of looking for safety, not to flight, which would be utterly vain before the Turkish cavalry, but to the strength of their squares, has contributed in no small degree to the remarkable steadiness

² Bounhord,
72. Val. 18,
20.

49.

The present
tactics of the
Russians in
the Turkish
wars.

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LXIX.

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¹ Val. 26,
28. Jom.
Guerres de
la Revol. i.
236.

50.
Turkish
mode of
fighting.

of the Russian infantry. On the other hand, the extreme ease with which the cavaliers can always make their escape on their admirable horses has increased the natural disposition of the Asiatic people to desultory warfare, and confirmed that tendency to dissolve after any considerable disaster which more or less belongs to all but regular troops, and justified the saying of the old Prince of Saxe-Cobourg, who with Suwarroff defeated them so severely in 1789, that "whenever he had once given the Turks a good beating, he felt no disquietude about them for the remainder of the campaign."¹

The Turkish method of fighting exactly resembles that of the ancients ; and a battle with them recalls to us those actions between the Romans and Asiatics of which Livy and Polybius have left such graphic descriptions. They constantly fortify their camps ; and when the day of battle arrives, draw out their forces in regular array in front of their intrenchments, where their stores, tents, ammunition, and riches are deposited. When the combat begins, they pour down with loud cries and extreme impetuosity, often on three sides at once of the squares of their enemy ; the whole plain is covered with their horsemen ; while their numerous guns endeavour to shake the enemy's array. It requires no small steadiness even in veteran troops to withstand such a charge. In close or single combat, whether in the field or in the breach, the European bayonet has never proved a match for the Turkish scimitar ; and no other nation is likely to find it more efficacious, when it failed in the hands of the French grenadiers in the breach of Acre, and of the Russian infantry on the ramparts of Roudschouck.* Generally speaking, accordingly, the Russian horse seek safety within the battalions of their infantry. Often the Turkish cavaliers, half-drunk with opium, pierce even the most solid

* Eight thousand Muscovites there perished under the Turkish scimitar ; and the Vizier wrote to the Grand Seignior, that so numerous were the heads taken off the Infidel, that they would make a bridge from earth to heaven.

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squares ; and instances are not wanting of their having, amidst the smoke and the strife, gone right through, and escaped on the opposite side without knowing where they had been. But if the first onset fails, as is often the case, the strength of the Ottomans, like the spring of a wild beast, is broken ; it is no easy matter to make them rally for continued efforts ; and if fortune proves in the end adverse, the vast array frequently disperses—every man returns to his home by the shortest road—the intrenched camp, with the whole stores and artillery of the army, is carried by storm ; and the Vizier, who had a few days before been at the head of a hundred and fifty thousand men, is sometimes scarcely able to collect ten thousand round the standards of the Prophet.¹

¹ Val. 9, 11,
26. Jomini,
Art de la
Guerre, ii.
590, 591.

The bloody war from 1736 to 1739, in which Marshal Munich bore so distinguished a part, and which more than repaired the disasters of Peter the Great on the Pruth, contributed in an essential manner to weaken the Turkish military power, by withdrawing from their dominion, and arraying definitively under the Russian banners, the Cossack and nomad tribes who in former wars had proved such formidable antagonists to their arms. Since that time the Muscovite battalions no longer invade the Ottoman plains trusting to their squares of foot alone, and painfully toiling, like the legions of Crassus in ancient, or those of Peter the Great in modern times, in the midst of never-ceasing clouds of Asiatic horse. The lances of the Cossacks are now seen on their side—the nomad tribes wheel round their masses ; and although the little hardy ponies on which these light-horsemen are mounted are no match in the shock of a charge for the superb steeds of the Osmanlis, and the lance, even in the bravest hands, can hardly ward off the keen edge of the Damascus scimitar—yet, in performing the duty of videttes and scouring the country for provisions, they are decidedly their superiors.² No Turkish army can now contend with the agility and address at the outposts of the Cossack

51.
Great effect
of the conquest of the
nomad nations by the
Russians.

² Val. 18,
19. Von
Hammer,
xix. 24, 27.

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horsemen ; and the fate of Peter the Great on the banks of the Pruth—that of being starved out by clouds of light horse—would now perhaps befall the Turkish army which should venture to trust itself in the open plains in their presence.

52.

Importance
of the un-
healthiness
of the plain
of the
Danube in
the wars
with the
Russians.

Such has been the importance of this change, and of the increasing strength of the Russian and decline of the Ottoman power, that the Balkan must have been crossed and Constantinople taken long before this time, had it not been for another circumstance which, for more than half a century, has prolonged the existence of the Turkish empire. This is the desert and pestilential nature of the vast plains forming the lower part of the basin of the Danube, which have always formed the theatre of war between them and the Christian powers. The flat parts of Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as of northern Bulgaria, five-sixths of which, from the devastation of long-continued war, and the ceaseless oppression of the Turks, are in a state of nature, are exceedingly unhealthy in the autumnal months. Their low situation exposes them to frequent inundation and deluges of wet in the winter and early part of the season, which the great heats and long drought of summer dry up, and render the source of marsh *miasmata* of the most fatal kind in the close of the season. At this time vegetation is withered ; the pasture for the cavalry disappears ; the earth, parched and hardened, cracks in several places, and pestilential effluvia spread with the exhalations drawn up from the dried pools by the burning sun.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, vi.
232, 233.

53.

Which has
prolonged
the exist-
ence of the
Turkish
empire.

Upon the German troops in particular this malaria generally proved so fatal, that it cut off more than half their numbers in every campaign ; and though upon the Russian constitution it was somewhat less destructive, yet it never failed to occasion greater ravages than the sword of the enemy. If these provinces were traversed by roads passable for wheeled carriages, it would be an easy matter to reach the foot of the Balkan range from the Russian frontier while the plains are still healthy, and the yet

green herbage affords ample pasturage for the horses. But the difficulty of dragging the artillery and waggons over several hundred miles of uncultivated plains, where there are no roads, and provisions are so scanty that the army must bring its whole supplies with itself, is such, that it is hardly possible to reach the northern face of the mountains before the great heats have commenced ; and, when this is done, the strength of Schumla and the courage of the inhabitants of the Balkan have hitherto always arrested the invaders, till the pestilential gales of autumn obliged them to retire. Thus, in its last stage of decrepitude, Turkey has derived safety from the effects of its own devastations ; and, sheltered behind the desert which itself has made, has found that security in the desolation which it probably would not have done from the prosperity of its empire.¹

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¹ Val. 14,
34, 40.
Jomini, Art
de la Guerre,
i. 21.

The only artificial barrier, in a military point of view, which Turkey possessed on its northern frontier, was the line of the Danube, on which several fortresses stood, which, if the Ottomans had possessed the military skill of the French, would have rendered it as impervious as the Rhine to hostile invasion. Brahilow, Giurgevo, Silistria, Roudschouck, Hirsova, and Widdin, besides several others of less note, constituted this formidable line of defence ; and though their fortifications would not bear a comparison with the works of Vauban and Cohorn, yet, manned by Turkish garrisons, and defended by the dagger and the scimitar, they formed a most effectual barrier. An invading army from the north found itself compelled to secure one or more of these barrier fortresses before it ventured to cross the Danube ; the desperate defence of the janissaries and inhabitants, prolonged, in almost every instance, the siege for some months, and meanwhile the season of spring and the early part of summer had passed ; the Mussulman proprietors had assembled in the great intrenched camp of Schumla ; the Balkan bristled with daring cavaliers ; and the invading

54.
Importance
of the fort-
resses on the
Danube.

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1808.

¹ Val. 48,
57. Jom. iii.
86, 387.55.
State of
Turkey at
the opening
of the war
with the
Russians in
1807.Nov. 23,
1806.² *Ante*, ch.
xiv. § 55.April 22,
1807.³ *Ante*, ch.
xiv. § 72.⁴ Val. 422.
⁵ *Ante*, ch.
xiv. § 57.

army, after it had effected with toil and bloodshed its conquest of the guardian fortresses of the Danube, found itself doomed to traverse a great extent of open waterless plains teeming with pestilential exhalations, only to see its numbers melt in inglorious warfare at the foot of the great mountain barrier of Constantinople.¹

War is the natural state between the Muscovites and the Turks: the intervals of peace are only truces. The slightest cause can at any time blow up the slumbering embers into a conflagration; and if pretexts are wanting, the radical and paramount duty of destroying the Infidel is a sufficient reason, when it seems expedient on either side, for renewing hostilities. In the present instance, however, it was not the interest, as it certainly was not the wish, of the Turks, to continue hostilities, when they had been deserted by Napoleon after the conclusion of the treaty of Tilsit. They had been involved in the contest in consequence of the dispute about the appointment of the hospodars, or governors, of Wallachia and Moldavia, of which an account has already been given, and the impolitic invasion of these provinces by the Russian armies under General Michelson, in autumn 1806, on the eve of the war between Prussia and France,² and the still more injudicious and calamitous attack by the English on Egypt in spring 1807, which, without weakening their power, increased their irritation.³ It has been already mentioned that the Turks—who at that period were weakened by the revolt both of the Pasha of Widdin, a strong place on the Danube, and of Czerny George, the far-famed rebel chief of Servia, who had succeeded in erecting an independent principality in that province, where he was at the head of fifty thousand men—were unable to withstand the invasion of forty thousand Russian troops on the plains of Moldavia and Wallachia;⁴ and that, accordingly, they abandoned entirely these provinces to the enemy,⁵ and prepared only to defend the line of the

Danube, the fortresses of which they put in a good state of defence.

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56.

Revolution
at Constantinople.

War was formally declared by Russia against Turkey in January 1807; and although the bold and well-conceived but ill-executed expedition of Sir John Duckworth against Constantinople had a powerful effect in rousing the Mahometan spirit in the empire, yet a tragical event which soon after ensued seemed again to prostrate its reviving strength, and expose it all but defenceless to the blows of its inveterate enemy. Sultaun Selim, an amiable and well-informed young man, had become sensible of the inveterate weakness of the Ottoman empire, and, like his more vigorous and undaunted successor, he conceived that the true remedy for these evils, and the only means of maintaining the independence of Turkey in the European commonwealth, was by gradually ingrafting on its inhabitants both the civil and military institutions of Christendom. These attempts, hazardous in some degree in all old-established countries, were in an especial manner to be dreaded in Turkey, from the political influence, as well as military power, of the numerous body of janissaries, who had contrived to engross almost all the official situations of consequence in the state. What chiefly, in the first instance, excited their jealousy was the corps of *Nizam-Jedeed*, or new troops, who were disciplined in the European method, and lodged in the principal barracks of Constantinople. They were intended, as they were well aware, to form the nucleus of a military force adequate to curb, and perhaps in the end punish, their excesses. The intrusting the forts of the Bosphorus, the gates of the capital, to these young troops, in an especial manner excited their jealousy. Emissaries from the janissary corps, unknown to the Sultaun, mingled in their ranks; the powerful body of the ulemahs, or priesthood, began to preach insurrection, upon the ground of the Sultaun aiming at the overthrow of the fundamental institutions of the Koran and the empire;¹ and a wide-

¹ Dumas,
Pr. His.
xix. 110,
111. Jom.
ii. 430, 431.

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1808.

spread conspiracy was formed among the disaffected, for the destruction of the reforming Sultaun and his confidential minister, Mahmoud.

57.
Dethrone-
ment of
Sultaun
Selim, and
accession of
Mustapha.

Mahmoud was the first victim. A well-concerted conspiracy among the guards of the forts of the Bosphorus, some of whom had been won over by the janissaries, proved fatal to that minister. He was assailed by some perfidious yamacks at the moment when he ordered them to put on the uniform of the new troops, which they had declared their willingness to do. In the first instance the Sultaun's faithful guards rescued him from their hands, but it was only to meet death on the Asiatic coast, at Buyukdere, when he disembarked from a boat into which he had thrown himself to escape from their fury. The yamacks now everywhere broke out into open insurrection; the janissaries favoured them; the Castles of Europe and Asia, the bulwarks of the Dardanelles, fell into their hands. The ulemahs declared against the Sultaun, upon the ground of his having attempted to subvert the fundamental institutions of their religion; the heads of the principal persons in Constantinople were successively brought by the ferocious bands of assassins to the square of the Etmeidan, the headquarters of the insurgents; the Sultaun himself only purchased a momentary respite, by delivering up to their fury the Bostandji-Bashi, who was particularly obnoxious; and the ferocious Cabakchy-Oglou, the chief of the rebellious yamacks, gained the entire command of the capital. After two days of bloodshed and confusion, which recalled the worst days of prætorian license, Selim was formally dethroned by the Grand Mufti, who announced to him, in person, his deposition. He was consigned to prison; at the entrance of which he met his nephew Mustapha, who was brought out thence to be placed on the throne, and whom he embraced in passing, wishing him prosperity, and commending his subjects to his care.¹ Immediately the cannon of the castles announced the commencement of the reign of the

June 1,
1807.

¹ Dumas,
xix. 113,
117. Jom.
ii. 431, 432.

new Sultaun; the foreign ambassadors all recognised his authority; the immense population of the city submitted with acclamations to his officers; and the unfortunate Selim, shut up in a dungeon, was soon as completely forgotten as if he had never existed.

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But although the revolution appeared to be thus completely successful in Constantinople, a greater degree of fidelity lingered in the breast of the troops on the Danube, and the progress of events in the capital paved the way for a second revolution. Frivolous, sensual, and apathetic, the new Sultaun, Mustapha, proved himself entirely unequal to the direction of the fearful tempest which had elevated him to the throne. Disunion soon broke out among the chiefs who had headed the revolt, whose common rapacity rendered them alike an object of horror to the people. The perfidious Mousa-Pasha, the Kaimmakam, who had been the main cause of Selim's overthrow, was seized, deposed, and his property confiscated; the ferocious Cabakchy-Oglou became all-powerful, and substituted in his stead Tayar Pasha, formerly Pasha of Trebizonde, who had been displaced by the former Sultaun. Tayar, however, soon showed himself not less tyrannical and rapacious than his predecessor. Prince Suzzo, the first dragoman of the Porte, was by his orders massacred at the gates of the seraglio, upon suspicion of having revealed to the ambassador of France the secret intention of the Divan to treat with England. Tayar's extortions roused the populace against him, who crowded round the gates of the seraglio demanding his head. His old ally Cabakchy yielded to the torrent, and proclaimed himself his enemy; and the tyrannical Kaimmakam, abandoned by all, was glad to escape to Roudschouck, where Mustapha Bairakdar, the commander of that place, was secretly collecting the disaffected, and fomenting a counter-revolution.¹

58.
Disturbances at Constantinople.

¹ Jom. iii.
382. Dum.
xix. 123,
124.

The arrival of Tayar, and his imminent danger, determined their measures. Selecting a choice body of four thousand horse, followed by twelve thousand infantry,

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59.

Bairakdar
marches to
Constanti-
nople from
Roud-
schouck.

chiefly the new troops, who could be relied on, he crossed the Balkan to Adrianople; and, together, they marched to Constantinople, bearing with them the *Sandjak-scheriff*, or standard of Mahomet. Bairakdar combated the rebels with their own weapons. Hadgi-Ali, fortified by a firman of the Grand Vizier, surrounded the house of Cabakchy-Oglou in the night with troops, surprised him in the middle of his harem, and cut off his head, which he sent to Bairakdar. The cries of the women of the harem having alarmed the neighbourhood, the yamacks assembled to arms; disregarding the firman of the Grand Vizier, they attacked and overthrew the handful of troops with which Hadgi-Ali had destroyed Cabakchy-Oglou, and shut them up in some houses, to which they set fire. The intrepid Ali, however, sallied forth sword in hand, cut his way through the besiegers, and threw himself into one of the castles of the Bosphorus, from whence, after being vainly besieged by the yamacks for three days, he made his way to the victorious army of the Grand Vizier, now at the gates of Constantinople.¹

¹ Dumas,
xix. 123,
126. Jom.
iii. 382, 383.

60.

Fresh revo-
lution. De-
position of
Mustapha.
Death of
Selim, and
accession of
Mahmoud.

At the entrance of the capital, Bairakdar made known his conditions to Sultaun Mustapha, viz., that he should exile the Grand Mufti, and disband the yamacks. Too happy to extricate himself from such a crisis by these concessions, the Sultaun at once agreed. Bairakdar feigned entire satisfaction, and the deluded sovereign resumed with undiminished zest his favourite amusements. But the undaunted pasha of Roudschouck had deeper designs in view. A few days after, learning that the Grand Seigneur had gone to pass the day with the ladies of his harem at one of his kiosks, or country residences, he put himself at the head of a chosen body of troops, and, as the Grand Vizier hesitated to accompany him, violently tore from his hands the seals of office, made himself master of the *Sandjak-scheriff*, and, preceded by that revered standard, marched to the seraglio to dethrone the reigning Sultaun, and restore the captive Selim.

The outer gates of the palace flew open at the sight of the sacred ensign; but the bostandjis at the inner gates opposed so firm a resistance, that time was afforded for the Sultaun to return by a back way, and regain his private apartments. Meanwhile Bairakdar's troops thundered at the gates, and loudly demanded that Selim should instantly be restored to them, and seated on the throne. To gain time, Mustapha's adherents feigned compliance; but, meanwhile, he himself gave orders that Selim should be strangled in prison. The order was immediately executed, and the dead body of the unhappy Sultaun thrown into the court to Bairakdar's troops. Pierced to the heart, the faithful Bairakdar threw himself on his master's remains, which he bedewed with his tears. In a transport of rage he ordered the officers of the seraglio, by whom the murder had been committed, to be brought before him and instantly executed. Sultaun Mustapha was dethroned, and shut up in the same prison from which Selim had just been brought to execution; and his younger brother MAHMOUD, the last of the royal and sacred race, was put on the throne.¹

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¹ Dumas,
xix. 124,
130. Jom.
iii. 383, 384.

It might have been supposed that this bloody catastrophe would have terminated these frightful revolutions; but fortune was not yet weary of exhibiting on this dark stage the mutability of human affairs. Bairakdar, as the just reward of his fidelity and courage, was created Grand Vizier, and for some months the machine of government went on smoothly and quietly; but it was soon discovered that Sultaun Mahmoud was not less determined to reform the national institutions than Selim had been; that to this disposition he joined an inflexibility of character, which rendered him incomparably more formidable; and that the great capacity of the Grand Vizier rendered it highly probable that their projects would soon be carried into complete execution. The jealousy of the janissaries was again awakened. A large portion of the army which had overthrown Sultaun Mus-

61.
A third revolution.

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LXIX.

1808.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 237,
238. Jom.
iii. 383, 384.

tapha, had been withdrawn to make head against the Russians on the Danube; and the opportunity seemed favourable for again assailing the new order of things. The ulemahs, the mufti, and the leaders of the disaffected, again organised an insurrection, and it broke out in the middle of November.¹

62.

Death of
Bairakdar.

Notwithstanding all the precautions which Mahmoud and the Grand Vizier Bairakdar could take, the party of the janissaries on this occasion proved victorious. A furious multitude of these haughty prætorians surrounded the noble barracks of the new troops, set fire to them, and consumed several hundreds in the conflagration; while another body directed their steps to the palace of the Grand Vizier, and a third to the seraglio itself. Four thousand chosen guards defended the Sul-taun, and defeated all the efforts of the insurgents at that point; but the few faithful defenders of the Grand Vizier were driven into his palace, to which the savage multitude immediately set fire; and the heroic Bairakdar, to shorten his sufferings, himself set fire to a powder magazine, which he had provided as a last resource against his enemies, and, with his whole household, was blown into the air.²

² Ann. Reg.
1808, 238.
Jom. iii.
383, 384.

63.

And of Mus-
tapha; and
triumph of
the janis-
saries.

Indignant at these scenes of horror, Sultaun Mahmoud gave orders for his troops to sally forth from the seraglio, and others from the adjoining forts of the Bosphorus to enter the town; and Constantinople immediately became the theatre of general bloodshed, massacre, and conflagration. The insurgents set fire to every quarter of which they obtained possession, to augment the confusion; and men, women, and children perished alike by the sword or in the flames. At length, after forty-eight hours of continued combat and unceasing horror, the party of the janissaries prevailed: great part of the new troops perished by their hands; the remainder surrendered; and the Sultaun, who had previously strangled his rival Mustapha in prison, was compelled to purchase peace by the sacri-

fice of all his ministers who were bent on the new order of things. Yet even in these moments of victorious insurrection, the force of old attachment and long-established loyalty to the sacred race was apparent. Mahmoud, the last of the race of Othman, with which the existence of the empire was thought to be wound up, became the object of veneration even to the rebels who had subverted his government; and he reigned in safety, with despotic power, by the support of the very faction who would have consigned him to the dungeon, and probably to the bowstring, had his imprisoned relative survived to be elevated to the throne.¹

¹ *Jom. iii.*
383, 385.
Ann. Reg.
1808, 238.

In these sanguinary tumults, the great bulk of the people remained in a state of passive indifference, ready to submit implicitly to either of the factions which might prove victorious in the strife. The contest lay between the ulemahs, the mufti, and the janissaries on the one side, and the court and officers of state, with such of the new troops as they had organised, on the other. The multitude took no part in the combat till the insurgents roused their passions by the hope of plunder or the sight of conflagration. Like the Parisian populace, on occasion of the contests for power between the club of Clichy and the bayonets of Augereau in 1797, or the grenadiers of Napoleon and the Council of the Five Hundred,² they submitted in silence to power which they could not resist, and avoided a contest in which they had no interest. Years of revolution had produced the same result in the metropolis of France which centuries of despotism had done in that of Turkey; and in the social conflicts which convulsed the state, fanaticism and tyranny in the east produced as great prostration in the multitude, and almost as great atrocities in the victorious bands, as infidelity and democracy had done in the west of Europe.³

64.
Passive indifference of the people during these disorders.

² *Ante*, ch. xxiv. § 49; and ch. xxix. § 51.

³ *Dumas*, xix. 129.

These repeated convulsions at Constantinople proved highly injurious to the Ottoman cause in the field of

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1808.

65.

Napoleon's
desertion of
the Turks in
the treaty of
Tilsit.

diplomacy, because they gave Napoleon, as already noticed, a pretext at the treaty of Tilsit for holding out, as he did, that his engagements were with Suldaun Selim ; that he was under no obligation to keep faith with the ferocious rabble who had overthrown his government, and consigned himself to a dungeon ; and that the Turks had now proved themselves a mere horde of barbarians, who could no longer be tolerated in Europe. It was one of the conditions, accordingly, of the treaty of Tilsit, that France should offer its mediation to effect an adjustment of the differences between Russia and the Sublime Porte ; and that, in the event of the latter declining the terms arranged between Alexander and Napoleon, she was to be jointly attacked by them both. Russia was to be at entire liberty to annex Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria to her empire ; while Macedonia, Thrace, Greece, and the islands of the Archipelago, were to be allotted to the French Emperor, who immediately commenced inquiries and surveys as to his share in the partition.* By such shameful desertion of his ally did Napoleon requite the Turks for the fidelity with which they had stood by his side, when the British squadron under Sir J. Duckworth threatened Constantinople with destruction, and, if more energetically led, might have effected it.

66.

Causes
which de-
ferred seri-
ous opera-
tions till
spring 1809.

Russia, however, had other and more pressing objects of ambition nearer home, which were also amply provided for by the treaty of Tilsit. The situation of her principal armies in the north of Poland, pointed them out as immediately deserving of attention ; and the conquerors of Eylau defiled in great and irresistible strength through St Petersburg, on their route for Finland. The prosecution of the war in that province,—long the object of desire to the cabinet of St Petersburg—which will immediately be considered, rendered the Russian government

* *Ante*, Chap. XLVI. § 78, where the clause of partition is quoted.

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1809.

Nov. 1808.

March 16,
1809.ⁱ Jom. iii.
385, 386.
Val. 44, 45.

unwilling to engage in hostilities at the same time on the Danube; and the Turks, distracted by the cruel dissensions at Constantinople, were too happy to prolong a negotiation which might relieve them during their agonies from the Muscovite battalions. But the war in Finland having terminated, as might have been expected, by the annexation of that province to the Russian dominions, and peace having been concluded, as will immediately be detailed, with the court of Stockholm, the Czar turned his ambitious eyes to the Turkish dominions. Napoleon formally abandoned the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia to the conquest of his powerful northern ally; the army on the Danube was reinforced by sixty battalions; and orders were sent to its commander, Prince Prosorowsky, to cross that river, and carry the war with vigour into the heart of the Turkish territories.¹

The Russians, however, were far from reaping at first that benefit from the distractions of the Ottoman empire, and their own surpassing strength, which might have been anticipated. Prosorowsky, though an able general, was little acquainted with the very peculiar mode of war required in Turkish warfare, where the enemy's infantry throw themselves into fortresses, which they defend with desperate courage to the last extremity; and their horse, scouring in vast multitudes a desert and unhealthy country, disappear upon a reverse, and again assemble in undiminished strength if a farther advance by the enemy is attempted. His force was very great—one hundred and twenty-five battalions, ninety-five squadrons, and ten thousand Cossacks, presented a total of eighty thousand infantry and twenty-five thousand horse, to which the Turks, severely weakened by their internal dissensions, and by the defection of Czerny George, who had declared for the Russians, had no force to oppose which was capable of keeping the field.²

67.
Forces of
the Russians
for the in-
vasion of
Turkey.² Val. 44,
45.

They wisely, therefore, confined themselves to throwing

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1809.

68.

Plan of the
Turkish
operations,
and their
success
against
Czerny
George.

May 1809.

July 1808.

¹ Jom. ii.
388, 389.

Val. 44, 45.

69.

The Russi-
ans are re-
pulsed be-
fore Giur-
gevo and
Brahilow.
May 19.

June 6.

strong garrisons into the fortresses on the Danube, and directed their principal forces against Servia, where their undisciplined militia were more likely to meet with antagonists in the field over whom they had a chance of prevailing. This plan proved entirely successful. Sultaun Mahmoud succeeded in rousing the military spirit of the Ottoman population in European Turkey; and eighty thousand Turks, to whom Czerny George could only oppose thirty thousand mountaineers, soon compelled him to recede from Nizza, to which he had advanced, to retire with loss behind the Morava, and finally to take refuge under the cannon of Belgrade. A corps of Russians now advanced from the north to the support of their Servian allies, and in some degree changed the face of affairs. The Ottomans on the side of Bosnia, which held out for the Grand Seignor, were driven back into their own territories, but still their grand army kept possession of the greater part of Servia, and threatened Belgrade; and it was evident, that unless a powerful diversion was effected on the Lower Danube, the campaign would terminate entirely to the advantage of the Turks.¹

Prozorowsky's first enterprise was against Giurgevo, near the mouth of the Danube; and, ignorant of the quality of the enemy with whom he had to deal, as well as misled by the successful issue of the assaults of Ismael and Oczakoff in former days, he ventured to attempt carrying it by escalade. A bloody repulse, in which he lost two thousand men, taught him his error. Abandoning his presumptuous attempt, the Russian general next invested Brahilow, on the left bank of the river, and began to batter its mouldering walls with heavy cannon, though without going through the form of regular approaches. Deeming it practicable to carry the place by escalade before the walls were breached, an assault was attempted in that manner; but the steady valour and deadly aim of the Mussulmans who manned the ramparts, again baffled all the efforts of the Muscovite infantry, and

they were repulsed with the loss of above seven thousand men. To conceal these disasters, the Russian general now converted the siege into a mere blockade, crossed the Danube at Galacz, and openly proclaimed his resolution to carry the war to the foot of the Balkan. But this operation was not prosecuted with any activity; and the Turks, emboldened by their success at Giurgevo and Brahilow, ventured, under the Grand Vizier, to cross the Danube at the former of these towns, and began to ravage the plains of Moldavia.¹

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LXIX.1809.
June 14.
Aug. 2.Aug. 4.
¹ Jom. iii.
389, 390.
Val. 45, 46.

Meanwhile Prosorowsky died, and he was succeeded in the command by Bagrathion, who, in order to draw back the Turks from their incursion on the northern bank of the river, immediately advanced against Silistria, the most important fortress on the whole frontier. But the Turks having thrown fifteen thousand men into that stronghold, the Russian general did not deem himself in sufficient force to undertake the siege of a place of such strength so defended, and therefore confined himself to a simple blockade, in maintaining which his troops suffered most severely from the unhealthiness of its environs in the autumnal months. The Grand Vizier, however, alarmed for a fortress of such importance, at length recrossed the Danube, and detached fifteen thousand men to beat up the enemy's quarters in its vicinity, in the end of October. Bagrathion advanced against this body, and an action, with no decisive result, ensued at Tartaritza, in which, however, it soon appeared that the Russians had been worsted; for Bagrathion immediately recrossed the Danube, and raised the blockade. Ismael, however, which had been long blockaded, surrendered on the 21st September; and Bagrathion, after so many reverses, succeeded in throwing a radiance over the conclusion of the campaign by the reduction of Brahilow, which had been long invested on both banks of the river, and surrendered by capitulation, from want of provisions, in the end of November.² This success gave the Russians the great

70.
The blockade of Silistria is raised by the Grand Vizier, but Brahilow falls.

Sept. Oct.

Nov. 3.

Sept. 21.

² Val. 45,
47. Jom. iii.
389, 390.

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LXIX.

advantage of a strong fortress, which secured their passage of the Danube.

1810.

71.

Annexation
of Walla-
chia and
Moldavia,
to Russia,
and opening
of the cam-
paign of
1810.

Jan. 21,
1810.

The Swedish war in 1808, and the Austrian one of 1809, had operated as important diversions in favour of the Ottoman forces; but in the beginning of 1810, the cabinet of St Petersburg resolved to carry on their operations with much greater vigour against the Turks, fearful lest the present favourable opportunity afforded by the conclusion of the peace with Napoleon should glide away, without its having been turned to due advantage by their completing the conquests agreed to by him from the Ottomans. In the beginning of the year, accordingly, an imperial ukase appeared, formally annexing Moldavia and Wallachia, which for three years had been occupied by their troops, to the Russian empire, and declaring the Danube, from the Austrian frontier to the sea, the southern European boundary of their mighty dominion. This decisive step was immediately followed up by the most extensive military preparations. The Muscovite army on the Danube was augmented to a hundred and ten thousand men, of whom thirty thousand were horse. Bagrathion, whose checkered success had been far from answering the expectations of the cabinet of St Petersburg, was replaced by Kamenskoi,* a general, learned, brave, and in the flower of his age; but by no means possessing experience in Turkish warfare adequate to the difficult task with which he was intrusted.¹

¹ Val. 64,
88. Jom.
iii. 464.

72.

Russian plan
of the cam-
paign of
1810.

Seeing himself at the head of so great a force, and desirous to signalise the commencement of his command by decisive success, he resolved to divide his troops into two parts; and while with the left he himself advanced by Hirsova to Schumla, the right was to lay siege to Silistria and Roudschouck, and the lesser fortresses on the Danube, so as to become master of the whole line of

* Son of the general of the same name, who commanded the Russians in the commencement of the Polish war in 1807, and went mad during the first retreat from the Vistula.—*Ante*, Chap. XLIV. § 28.

that important stream. The project was well conceived, as it offered the important advantage of crossing the plains and barren hills between the Danube and the Balkan before the unhealthy heats commenced, and when the yet green herbage afforded ample subsistence for the horses of the army. But it failed from not sufficiently estimating the desperate valour of the Turks in the defence of fortified places, which has so often rendered abortive the best-laid plans for the subversion of the Ottoman empire.¹

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¹ Jom. iii.
464, 465.
Val. 64, 68.

During the winter, a sort of tacit armistice, attended by very singular effects, prevailed between the two armies. Though the Russians were masters of many batteries on the left bank of the Danube, and, by their possession of Brahilow, had the command of its principal mouth, yet, during the whole winter of 1809-10, they made no attempt to obstruct the navigation of that river; the Turkish and Austrian vessels continued to ply upon it as during a period of profound peace, and English goods to an enormous amount were conveyed up the stream, paid duties to the pasha of Widdin, and were carried through the Rothenbourg, on men's heads and horses' backs, into Hungary, and thence through the whole of Germany. The secret cause of this extraordinary traffic was to be found in the Continental System of Napoleon, then in full activity in northern Europe, which had so immensely enhanced the price of all kinds of British merchandise, that the vast profits of the merchants who were fortunate enough to get any introduced, enabled them to bribe the authorities in all the different countries through which they passed to wink at the transit of the goods, even in direct violation of the engagements of their respective sovereigns. Thus, at the very time that the French Emperor flattered himself that, by the treaty of Tilsit, and the accession of the Russian autocrat to the Continental coalition, he had closed the last inlets against the introduction of English manufactures to the Continent, the generals of the very

73.
Great trade
of the Eng-
lish up the
Danube into
Germany.

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LXIX.

1810.

¹ Val. 66,
67.

power he had subdued were conniving at the system against which he had made such strenuous efforts, and found in their conquests the means of extending it: a striking proof of the extreme difficulty, even with the greatest power, of extinguishing that mutual intercourse which arises out of the wants, and grows with the happiness of mankind.¹

74.
First opera-
tions of the
campaign of
1810.

The right wing of the Russians crossed the Danube, in the middle of March, at Casemir, between Roudschouck and Widdin; but it was not till the middle of May that the left wing entered upon the campaign, and advanced to Bazarjik. Meanwhile the Grand Vizier, Kara-Yusuf Pasha, already known by his defence of Acre against Napoleon,² had been indefatigable in his endeavours to accumulate and discipline a formidable force in the great intrenched camp of SCHUMLA, and to strengthen the numerous redoubts by which it is defended; but when the Russians approached, he cautiously kept his still ill-disciplined host within their ramparts. Kamenskoi immediately laid siege to Bazarjik, which, after a short siege and the capture of eight hundred of its garrison in an unfortunate sortie, was carried by assault, in the beginning of June, with two thousand prisoners.³

June 3.

³ Val. 68,
70. Jom.
iii. 465.75.
Fall of
Silistria,
and advance
of the Rus-
sians to
Schumla.

The Russians, who were sixty thousand strong on the Lower Danube, finding no enemy to oppose them in the field, divided their forces; and while the main body, under Kamenskoi in person, advanced towards the Balkan, Langeron, with his corps, was despatched to besiege Silistria, and lesser bodies were sent against Tourtoukai and Rasgrad. Langeron proved entirely successful: in seven days after he appeared before its walls, Silistria, one of the strongest places on the Danube, surrendered by capitulation, though the sap was still one hundred and eighty yards from the ditch, on condition only of the garrison and inhabitants retiring where they chose; while Tourtoukai and Rasgrad yielded soon after to the terrors of a bombardment. These successes, which proved

June 10.

June 13.

June 17.

that a golden key, or favourable conditions to the inhabitants, could sometimes be as effectual as an iron one, or force, in opening the Turkish gates, encouraged the commander-in-chief, without awaiting the issue of the operations of his right wing against Roudschouck, to advance towards Schumla ; and he appeared, accordingly, on the 22d June, with forty thousand men in front of that celebrated stronghold, hitherto the *ne plus ultra* of Muscovite advance towards Constantinople.¹

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June 22.
¹ Jom. iii.
465. Val.
68, 71.

Schumla, which in all the wars between Russia and Turkey, has been a place of the highest importance, is a considerable town, situated on the northern slope of the Balkan, where the great road from Belgrade and Bucharest to Constantinople begins to ascend the slopes of the mountains. To the traveller who approaches it from the open and desert hills extending southward from the Danube, it exhibits the appearance of a triangular sheet of vast extent spread over the hollow of the mountains, and extending up the heights on either side ; not unlike the distant view of Algiers as seen rising from the waves of the Mediterranean. Thirty thousand industrious inhabitants fill its streets with animation, and a clear torrent descending through its centre, secures both to them and the inmates of the intrenched camp, which extends far beyond their dwellings, an ample supply of the indispensable element of water. The town cannot be said to be regularly fortified, even though its position, at the point of intersection of the principal roads which cross the Balkan from north to south, renders it a strategical point of the very highest importance ; and it is overhung, in rear, by a succession of eminences, which rise one above another till they are lost in the woody thickets of Mount Hæmus. But these heights, of difficult access, and covered with thick brushwood, are entirely inaccessible to European cavalry and artillery ; the vast circuit of the intrenched camp renders it almost impossible to invest or blockade its circumference ; supplies are

76.
Description
of Schumla.

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LXIX.

1810.

thus introduced with ease from the rear; and though the redoubts consist only of a ditch and rampart of clay, and they are placed merely on the commanding points, leaving often a space several hundred yards broad open without any defence, yet in the hands of the Turks and janissaries they constituted a most efficient barrier. In 1744, these fieldworks had withstood the utmost efforts of the Russians, under Marshal Romanzoff; and at this time, when they were garrisoned by Yusuf Pasha, the defender of Acre, with thirty thousand chosen troops, who had employed months in clearing out and strengthening them, it seemed an undertaking beyond the strength even of Kamenskoi's army to effect their conquest.¹

¹ Malte-
Brun, vi.
238. Walsh,
158.
Clarke's
Travels,
viii. 241.
Val. 49.

77.

Unsuccess-
ful opera-
tions against
Schumla.

The Russian general commenced his operations on his own right, in order to turn the Turkish camp, and, establishing himself on the heights in its rear, interpose between the Grand Vizier and Constantinople. He succeeded in placing a division on these rugged and wood-clad eminences; but the difficulty of dragging artillery up such broken ravines, and the danger of risking a large part of the army in a position where, if defeated, it would be deprived of a retreat to the Danube, deterred him from establishing himself in that important position. Several inconsiderable actions took place, particularly at the heights of the Grotto, in the rear of Schumla, and the Russians were entirely masters of the road from that town to Constantinople; but the investment was never complete. A large convoy of provisions was introduced into the Turkish camp soon after the blockade began, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance of the besiegers; the desperate valour of the janissaries rendered the contest for every thicket or rocky eminence a scene of blood, in which the assailants generally lost more men than the enemy; the strength of the works in front to the north of the town, precluded the hope of a successful assault; and, after several weeks spent in fruitless efforts, Kamenskoi was obliged to renounce his enterprise.² To

June 24.

July 7.

July 12.
² Jom. iii.
465, 466.
Val. 77, 93.

cover the disgrace of an open retreat, he left thirty thousand men, under his brother, to continue a distant blockade, and himself hastened, with twelve thousand choice troops, to co-operate in the siege of ROUDSCHOUCK.

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This fortress, which became justly celebrated by the murderous assault which followed, is a Turkish town containing thirty thousand inhabitants, with a single rampart and wet ditch, but without either bastions, counterscarps, glacis, or outworks, like the other Turkish fortresses, which have already been described. It did not possess more powerful means of defence than Brailow, nor so much as Silistria; but every defect was supplied by the resources of the governor HASSAN PASHA, the Bosniak Aga, a man of cool judgment and invincible resolution. He was at the head of a garrison of seven thousand men, and his example had roused the whole male population of the place capable of bearing arms, nearly as numerous, to the determination of unflinching resistance in defence of their hearths and their liberty. When Kamenskoi joined the besieging force, its numbers were raised to above twenty thousand men; and as the rampart was in part ruined, though it could hardly be said that a practicable breach had been effected, an assault was ordered. Every effort was made to animate the soldiers; Kamenskoi himself, in full uniform, rode through the ranks, speaking to the men on the exploits of their regiments in former times, and rousing their courage for the decisive assault which was approaching. The clergy joined in the efforts to animate them; and the attack was ordered on the 3d August—a day then held in peculiar veneration in Russia, from being the fête-day of the Empress Mother.¹

78.
Preparations for the assault of Roudschouck.

¹ Val. 98,
101. Jom.
iii. 466.

Hassan Pasha, from the time that the cannon of the besiegers had begun to rattle against his walls, had not returned a shot; and from this circumstance, the younger Russian soldiers flattered themselves that very little resistance was to be anticipated; while the veterans

79.
Dreadful defeat of the assault.
Aug. 3.

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1810.

feared, from long experience, that he was only reserving his whole strength for the decisive moment of assault. During the whole preceding night, a vehement fire was kept up from all the batteries; and at daybreak the troops advanced to the attack in five massy columns, one of which was charged with mounting the breach, while the others were to endeavour to effect a diversion by escalading the rampart in those situations where it was still uninjured. The Muscovites advanced with their wonted steadiness to the assault, and soon reached the foot of the scarp; but it was immediately found that the Pasha's previous silence had arisen neither from terror nor inattention. From every roof, window, and loophole that could bear upon the assailants, a dreadful fire issued the moment that they came within range: the parapet and the *terre-pleine* were lined with undaunted Mussulmans, who opened a well-sustained discharge upon the enemy; and the troops, staggered by the severity of the fire, recoiled from the foot of the rampart, and began from the opposite side of the fosse to exchange musket-shots with their visible and invisible antagonists. In vain the officers, wearied of this fruitless butchery, leaped into the ditch, mounted the scaling-ladders, and reached the summit of the rampart. In that exposed situation they were speedily cut off by the Turkish scimitars; and two columns, which the besieged permitted to enter, were almost entirely destroyed by the dreadful attack of the janissaries, armed with their daggers and sabres. At noon the Turkish flag still waved on all the minarets; and it was not till six at night that the commander-in-chief reluctantly sounded a retreat, leaving eight thousand killed and wounded in the ditch and around the walls, of whom four thousand were immediately decapitated by their valiant, but, in this respect, ruthless enemies.¹*

¹ Val. 101,
103. Jom.
iii. 466.

* A circumstance characteristic of the Russian armies at this period occurred at this assault. Many soldiers, under pretence of being wounded as usual in similar cases, strayed from the scene of danger, and got into the rear: Kamens-

This dreadful repulse wellnigh prostrated the strength of the besiegers, and necessarily disabled them from attempting anything beyond an ineffectual blockade; and if the Grand Vizier at Schumla had taken advantage of it, to sally forth with all his forces and harass the enemy, the result probably would have been, that the Russians at all points would have been driven across the Danube. But, with true Turkish apathy, he remained quiet where he was, without attempting anything serious, and thus Kamenskoi gained a precious breathing-time to repair his disasters. A partial sally, a few days afterwards, by the Grand Vizier, near Schumla, was repulsed with the loss of three thousand men, though the victory was far from being bloodless to the Russians, who lost above half that number. Intimidated by these disasters, they soon afterwards raised the investment of Schumla, and retired to Bazarjik and the Danube: while Kamenskoi himself, from numerical weakness, was obliged to abandon the island in the Danube which he had occupied opposite Roudschouck, which was immediately occupied by the besieged, who destroyed the works erected there, so that their communication with the country was in a great degree restored. Nevertheless the Russians, with great perseverance, still kept their ground before the fortress on the north bank of the Danube; and an opportunity soon occurred of striking an important blow.¹

The Divan ordered the Beglerbeg, or viceroy, of Roumelia, a considerable potentate in European Turkey, recently appointed Seraskier, or commander-in-chief of his province, to assemble a force for the deliverance of Roudschouck, the pasha of which was now making the most vehement representations of his inability to continue the defence much longer if he was not relieved, as

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80.

Operations
which fol-
lowed this
defeat.

Aug. 7.

¹ Jom. iii.
466. Val.
102, 107.81.
Operations
of the Seras-
kier of
Sophia for
the raising
of the siege.

koi caused them all to be examined, and such as were unhurt were sent back to their posts *with strokes of the whip*. This laborious operation consumed a considerable time, which might have been more profitably employed in pushing forward the assault.—VAL. 104.

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his provisions were nearly exhausted.* For this purpose the Seraskier assembled a body of thirty thousand men on the river Jantra, at the distance of about forty miles from the fortress. Sensible, however, that his troops, which were for the most part mere undisciplined militia, would be wholly unable to withstand the Russian army in the open field, he took post on the river near BATTIN, and, after the Turkish fashion, immediately proceeded to fortify his camp. Its situation was well selected, being a half-deserted plain at the confluence of the Jantra and the Danube, with a few fruit-trees scattered over its surface, and watered on two sides by those ample streams. When seen from a distance, this surface appeared level, but on a nearer approach it was discovered to be intersected by several rocky ravines. Two of these fissures, which were impassable even for foot-soldiers, defended the sides of the camp, which rested on the Danube near the confluence of the two rivers in rear; while the neck of land which lay between them, and by which alone access could be obtained to its interior, strengthened by two redoubts, was covered, in the interval between them, with thick bushes and underwood. In them the janissary light infantry would have a decided superiority over the Russian tirailleurs, and through their intricacies it would be difficult for the latter to bring up their numerous artillery to counterbalance this disadvantage. Nevertheless Kamenskoi, desirous to wipe off the disgrace of the repulse at Roudschouck, and fearful of the approach of Ali Pasha, the far-famed ruler of Albania, who with his hardy mountaineers was slowly approaching, at the summons of the Grand Seignior, to co-operate against the Russians, resolved to hazard an attack.¹

For this purpose, having previously strengthened the

¹ Val. 110,
115. Jom.
iii. 467.

* "We have almost lost our eyesight in straining to see the columns approaching to deliver us. Our loss already amounts to six thousand men; and we have only provisions for ten days."—*The Bosniak Aga to the Grand Vizier*, August 12, 1810; VAL. 107.

besieging force before Roudschouck with half of the forces which had been withdrawn from Schumla, and detached General Kulneff with a division of six thousand men to reconnoitre the Turkish camp, and prevent them from foraging beyond its limits, the general-in-chief set out from the environs of Roudschouck with twelve thousand men, and, following the right bank of the river, appeared in front of the Turkish intrenchments. They appeared to be so strong, that, notwithstanding the Russian superiority, especially in artillery, of which they had a hundred pieces, it was deemed impracticable to hazard an attack in front, at least unless strongly supported by simultaneous operations on either flank. The enemy, it was soon discovered, had two intrenched camps, the works of which mutually supported each other, and their guns were so disposed as completely to command in rear the navigation of the Danube, on which they had also a powerful flotilla destined for the relief of Roudschouck. The only practicable way of reaching them that remained was by an attack in flank, near the village of Battin, where the ravine, though steep and rugged, was practicable for foot-soldiers; while as heavy a fire as possible was opened on the intrenched camp in front nearest the isthmus, from an eminence which had been with great judgment seized and strengthened by the Cossacks. Meanwhile large reinforcements were ordered up under Woinoff from Silistria; and as a strong reconnoissance under Kulneff on the front of the enemy's position, with the troops in square, had led to no advantage, and was attended with considerable loss, Kamenskoi made every effort to collect troops from all quarters; and Woinoff having at length come up with five thousand men, the grand attack was fixed for the 7th September.¹

The battle commenced at daybreak. Kamenskoi himself, at the head of the whole cavalry, advanced to within cannon-shot of the principal camp; while another column, composed of infantry, moved up in squares to the front

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LXIX.1810.
82.Kamenskoi's plan
of attack on
the Turkish
camp.
Aug. 27.

Aug. 27.

Sept. 4.

¹ Val. 115,
125.83.
Battle of
Battin.
Sept. 7.

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of the lesser one, and Kulneff with the left was despatched to the other side of the ravine, which formed the western defence of the Turkish position. But the latter general did not arrive at the point of attack assigned to him till considerably after the time calculated on, which led to the discomfiture of the Russians on the first day. Kamenskoi himself with the centre stormed the principal heights which commanded one of the intrenched camps, though with great loss, and put all the Turks who defended them to the sword. But Kulneff failed in his attack on the left from the side of the ravine; and though one of his columns succeeded in penetrating into the camp, yet it was immediately cut to pieces by the Turkish scimitars: while on the right the brave Illowolski, who conducted the assault on the other intrenched camp, was mortally wounded on the edge of the ditch, and the most forward of his followers who crossed it left their heads in the hands of the Turks, who fought like desperadoes. Thus the attack failed on both flanks, though a most important advantage had been gained in the centre. Upon this Kamenskoi desisted from further attempts for the night; merely retaining the important heights which he himself had won, and concentrating his troops as much as possible in that quarter, while Kulneff got under shelter in the bottom of the rocky ravine which he had crossed.¹

¹ Val. 124,
127.

84.
Plan for the
renewal of
the battle.

The Turkish camps were now completely surrounded by the Muscovite troops, and many of the imperial generals, seeing the desperate manner in which they had been defended on the preceding day, strongly recommended the general-in-chief to make a bridge of gold for a retiring enemy, and withdraw Kulneff's divisions from the ravine during the night, so as to leave them a retreat up the course of the Danube. The Turks also, elated by their success in the defence of their works, gave way to every demonstration of joy; and in sight of both armies, went through the barbarous operation, on the top of their

intrenchments, of decapitating the Russians who had been left on the field.* But Kamenskoi was resolute : orders were given to renew the attack at daybreak, the principal effort being directed against the gorge of the camps, where the works, owing to the natural strength of the ravines in their rear, were least formidable. Kulneff, who had had a violent altercation with the general-in-chief, was put under arrest, and the command of his troops given to Sabanejef. The whole artillery was brought to bear on the enemy's camp ; that on Kamenskoi's heights firing down from above, that of Sabanejef being pointed up from the ravine below, so as to throw the howitzers upwards into the intrenchments.¹

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1810.

¹ Val. 129.

The attack of Sabanejef proved entirely successful. After encountering a vigorous opposition, his troops, gallantly led by their general, made their way into the camp to which he was opposed ; but the Turks, seeing their position no longer tenable, adopted and bravely executed a most extraordinary resolution. Suddenly assembling the whole of his cavalry and the bravest of his infantry, Muktar Pasha, abandoning his camp and all its contents, poured out by one of the gates like a torrent, and, making straight across the plateau, sought the shelter of the ravine on the right, which was not occupied by the Russians in any force. The unlooked-for deluge had wellnigh swept away Kamenskoi himself, who was moving at the time from the left to the centre, in order to direct an attack on the front of the camp. For a considerable time this singular evacuation remained unknown to the Russian centre, who, seeing the standards of Mahomet still floating on the intrenchments, and a multitude of foot-soldiers on the rampart firing vehemently, and shouting "Allah !" deemed the tumult owing only to a partial

85.
Ultimate
victory of
the Rus-
sians.
Sept. 8.

* The Prince de Ligne observed regarding this practice of the Turks of cutting off the heads of the wounded or prisoners, that it was "more formidable in appearance than reality ; for it could do no harm to the dead ; it was often a relief to the wounded ; and it was rather an advantage to the unhurt, as it left them no chance of escape but in victory."— VAL. 69.

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sally from the works. But at length they too left the rampart; its fire gradually died away; the standards alone remained on the summit; and the fact becoming known, the Russians on all sides poured with loud shouts into the enclosure, and with savage revenge, excited by the Turkish cruelty to the prisoners, put all they still found within to the sword. The guns on the intrenchments were instantly turned against the flying swarms of Ottomans, and the Russian cavalry quickly pursuing, came up even with their horse, and did considerable mischief. But the decisive trophies of the victory were, the principal camp of the Ottomans, with fourteen guns and two hundred standards; the whole flotilla which lay in the Danube, laden with provisions and ammunition for the relief of Roudschouck; and five thousand men, who in the lesser camp were obliged to surrender as prisoners of war, with Achmet Pasha, the second in command. The brave Seraskier had died the same day of his wounds.¹

¹ Val. 129,
133, Jom.
iii. 467.

86.
Capitulation
of
Roud-
schouck.
Sept. 12.

The immediate consequence of this great victory was the capture of Sistowa, a fortified place on the Danube, in the neighbourhood, which surrendered a few days afterwards, with the whole Turkish flotilla which had taken refuge under its walls. Meanwhile, Count Langeron, with the troops at Roudschouck now considerably reinforced, was pressing the siege of that fortress with the utmost possible activity; and had made himself master of the island in the Danube, which forms the point of communication between it and the fortress of Giurgevo, situated on the opposite bank. Seeing the commander of the latter place, which was the weaker of the two, thus separated from his colleague, Langeron summoned him to surrender; but the reply was in the true laconic style: "Giurgevo is not yet swimming in its blood." The Bosniak Aga, however, seeing the flotilla, on which his whole hopes of relief were fixed, captured, became sensible of the necessity of coming to terms of accommodation. But the conqueror of Battin, elated with his recent success,

and the effects of a similar severity to Achmet Pasha, refused any terms but those of absolute surrender ; upon which the proud Turk declared he would die in the breach first. The intelligence, however, which the Russian general received shortly after, of the elevation of Bernadotte to the rank of crown-prince and heir-apparent of Sweden, coupled with accounts of the sacred standard having been unfurled at Constantinople, induced him to relax from this ill-timed rigour ; and by the intervention of Count Langeron, a capitulation was at length agreed on, in the end of September, in virtue of which the pasha was permitted to retire with his whole troops and the inhabitants, leaving only the walls, cannon, standards, and military stores to the Russians. These conditions, the fair reward of his heroic defence, were so favourable, that the Bosniak Aga would probably have willingly acceded to them in the beginning of the siege : and the Pasha of Giurgevo immediately after capitulated on the same favourable terms.¹

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1810.

Sept. 26.

Sept. 28.
1 Jom. iii.
467. Val.
135, 139.

Though the Russians had thus made themselves masters of these important strongholds on the Danube, yet the obstinate resistance of the Bosniak Aga had entirely ruined their designs for the campaign. The rainy season had now set in ; the evacuation of Roudschouck, which the Turks prolonged as much as possible, took nearly a month ; Kamenskoi did not consider it safe to undertake any other enterprise till he was finally rid of his formidable antagonist. Even when the Russians were put entirely in possession of the fortress in the end of October, they got nothing but half-ruined walls and a deserted town, tenanted only by five hundred of the lowest of the people ; while the long trains conveying the garrison and inhabitants, the real strength of Roudschouck, to the southward, formed an army in the field little less formidable than it had been behind its blood-stained ramparts. A deplorable catastrophe, characteristic of the envenomed character of those semi-religious wars,

87.
Evacuation
of Roud-
schouck, and
ruin of Sis-
towna.

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took place at the same period. Kamenskoi, disquieted at the prolonged resistance of Roudschouck, and the intelligence of great preparations at Constantinople, despatched orders to General St Priest, in command at Sistowa, to destroy that town, and bring all his forces to the main army. These orders, dictated in a moment of groundless alarm, were too faithfully executed : Sistowa was reduced to a heap of ruins ; its inhabitants, twenty thousand in number, were transported to the opposite side of the Danube, where they were sheltered from the drenching rains in huts newly constructed ; great flocks of wild pigeons settled in the ruins of this once-flourishing town ; and its smiling environs, composed of vine-clad hills, intermingled with roses, were soon choked by weeds, and tenanted only by the wild foxes from the neighbouring solitudes.¹*

¹ Val. 139,
140. Jom.
iii. 467.

88.
Conclusion
of the cam-
paign.
Oct. 29.

It was necessary, however, to do something to give eclat to the conclusion of the campaign ; and for this reason, the siege of Nicopolis was undertaken—a considerable town on the southern bank of the Danube, though not so flourishing as Sistowa had been. Kamenskoi, accordingly, sat down before it with thirty thousand men ; while the indefatigable Bosniak Aga approached Tirnova with seventeen thousand who had followed his standard from Roudschouck, and who soon formed the basis of a respectable army. The commander of that place, however, shut his gates against such formidable guests ; and the Bosniak Aga at length found refuge in Plewne, while the Pasha of Giurgevo was received into Tirnova.

* A singular proof of the extraordinary fertility of the soil, and its adaptation for the cultivation of the vine, occurred at Roudschouck at this period. The whole slopes in its vicinity are covered with vines, which grow in that district with such luxuriance, that though the besieging army had feasted on them for some weeks before the armistice began, yet the inhabitants there, during its continuance, reaped a very fair crop from their gardens. The combined efforts of two armies were unable to consume the profuse fruits of a few square miles. The vine, which is there indigenous, grows with such tenacity on the slopes, that it is hardly possible, by any efforts of cultivation, to extirpate it.—VAL. 47.

Meanwhile Nicopolis capitulated, upon which the Russians recrossed the Danube, and took up their winter-quarters for the most part in Wallachia and Moldavia, leaving three divisions only on the right bank, at Nicopolis, Roudschouck, and Silistria. Soon after, the cabinet of St Petersburg, worn out with this endless war of sieges, in which they frequently combated at a disadvantage, and foreseeing a formidable struggle nearer home, where they would need all their strength, sent orders to Kamenskoi to destroy all the fortified places on the right bank of the Danube, with the exception of Roudschouck, which was to be retained only as a *tête-de-pont*. In pursuance of these directions, the walls of Silistria and Nicopolis were blown up, and Roudschouck was put in a respectable posture of defence; but before any offensive operations could be commenced, Kamenskoi was seized with the malady of which he soon after died; and he was succeeded by an officer destined to immortal celebrity in a more glorious war—GENERAL KUTUSOFF.¹

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Dec. 12.

¹ Jom. iii.
467. Val.
141, 151.

The campaign of 1811, however, of necessity was laid out upon a defensive plan merely. The Russian army, indeed, had been reinforced in the early part of the winter by a strong division under General Suwarroff, son of the great marshal of the same name, in consequence of which, Kamenskoi, before his illness rendered him unfit for service, had made a vigorous winter-march against Loweza, which was surprised and taken, with four thousand men, in the depth of winter. But immediately afterwards, the relations between the cabinet of St Petersburg and that of the Tuileries became so menacing, that the Emperor Alexander gave orders for five divisions of the army to break up from their winter-quarters on the Danube, and direct their march, not towards the Balkan and Constantinople, but to Poland and the Vistula. This great deduction at once reduced the Russians to one-half of their former amount; and with fifty thousand men merely, it was not only impossible for Kutusoff to

89.
Great draft
of troops
from the
Danube to
Poland.
Jan. 19.

Feb. 1811.

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1811.

prosecute offensive operations to the south of the Danube, but even difficult for him to maintain his footing on the south of that river in the few strongholds of which he still retained possession. Encouraged by this material diminution in the strength of their enemies, and thoroughly roused by the dangers they had incurred in the preceding campaign, the Turkish government made the most vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war; and not only put themselves at all points into a good posture of defence, but prepared to take advantage of the weakness of their enemies, and regain all the strongholds which they had lost on the right bank of the Danube. The native vigour of the Osmanli, now thoroughly roused, appeared in the most conspicuous manner on this occasion. Achmet Pasha, who had gained such renown by the defence of Brahilow, commanded the main army, which numbered sixty thousand combatants, with seventy-eight pieces of artillery admirably equipped. He advanced in the middle of June towards Roudschouck at the head of this imposing force, while at the same time a corps of twenty thousand men was detached to the left, towards Widdin, to keep in check Czerny George and the Serbians, and nearly the same number to the right, to observe Silistria, Nicopolis, and Tourtoukai, and occupy any of these places which might be evacuated by the enemy.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
542. Val.
150, 152.

90.
Battle of
Roud-
schouck.

July 2.

It affords a strong proof of the native vigour, which, despite the innumerable errors of their political institutions, animated the Turkish empire, that they were capable, in the third year of the war, and without any external aid, of putting forth such formidable forces. Their approach immediately made Kutusoff concentrate his troops, and he himself crossed the Danube, and took post with eighteen thousand men in front of Roudschouck. As the superiority of the enemy, especially in cavalry, was so great, the Russian general remained on the defensive, and awaited their approach in the regular squares, which had so often dissipated the vast hordes of the

Osmanli horse. The attack of the Ottomans was made in their usual manner—charging with loud shouts these squares on three sides at once; but in the tumult of the onset, and when the infantry were in a manner encircled by their enemies, the discernment of the Grand Vizier had prepared a separate corps which was to penetrate into the town. This able plan all but succeeded. The Turkish guns, admirably directed, ploughed through the Russian squares, while the spahis, in every quarter, threw themselves with impetuosity upon them over the whole position. The squares on the right, where they had the advantage of having one flank secured by the precipitous banks of the river Lomin, withstood the shock; but the centre suffered severely from the cannonade of the Turkish batteries, and the left was wellnigh swept away by the torrent of their incomparable cavalry.¹

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¹ Val. 152.
Jom. iii.
543.

Kutusoff brought up his dragoons to keep at a distance the increasing squadrons of the spahis; but then was seen how inadequate the European is to the encounter of the Asiatic horse. In a moment the advancing mass of the Muscovites and Cossacks was charged in flank, pierced through, and overthrown. Four regiments were almost destroyed; and the Ottoman horsemen, deeming the victory won, dashed through the intervals of the squares with deafening cries, disregarding the fire which assailed them on either flank, and penetrated in the rear even as far as the gardens of the town. All seemed lost; and if the Grand Vizier had had infantry at hand to support his cavalry, it would have been so. But the gallant horsemen, having no aid from foot-soldiers, were unable to establish themselves in the fortress; the grape-shot from the ramparts shook their ranks, and they were compelled to retreat through the steady squares, who stood immovable as if rooted to the ground, and again poured in a deadly volley on either side of the now diminished squadrons. This completed the discomfiture of the Turks, who took refuge in their intrenched camp;²

91.
Desperate
contest,
which at
length ter-
minates to
the advan-
tage of the
Russians.

² Jom. iii.
543. Val.
152, 155.

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but although Kutusoff, seeing the field deserted, advanced to the front of its rampart, he did not venture to storm the works, and soon after withdrew within the walls of Roudschouck, with the loss of three thousand men, the Turks being weakened by at least an equal number.

92.
Evacuation
of Roud-
schouck by
the Rus-
sians.

Though this memorable battle was highly honourable to the discipline and intrepidity of the Russians, considering the great numerical superiority of their enemies, and the admirable quality of their cavalry, yet it convinced Kutusoff of the impossibility of maintaining his footing on the right bank of the Danube. The extensive works of Roudschouck required a garrison of at least ten thousand men—nearly half the disposable force which he had at command. He wisely resolved, accordingly, to prefer a campaign in the field, where the discipline of his troops might give them the advantage, to the murderous contest behind walls, where the Turks were so formidable. Abandoning, therefore, to his antagonist the object of so much bloodshed, he withdrew from Roudschouck after barbarously burning the town, and crossed over entirely to the left bank of the river. The Bosniak Aga, amidst the pomp of Oriental power and the clang of military instruments, again took possession of the ramparts which he had so nobly defended; the fugitive inhabitants of the fortress returned in joyful crowds to their much-loved and long-deserted homes; the standards of Mahomet were again displayed from the battlements; the beautiful vineyards in the environs were cleared out and dressed by the hands of the owners; and, contrary to the order of things for above a century, the Crescent appeared triumphant over the cross.¹

¹ Val. 156,
158. Jom.
iii. 543.

93.
The Turks
cross the
Danube.
Sept. 8.

Overjoyed at this great success, the Grand Vizier determined to cross the Danube, and expel the Russians from all the Turkish territory which they held in Wallachia and Moldavia. After six weeks spent in repairing the fortifications of Roudschouck, and collecting forces from all sides, the passage was effected in the night of the 8th

September; the Grand Vizier having with great skill drawn the attention of his antagonists to a feigned point of passage, whereby the real one was overlooked. No sooner, however, was the passage discovered than the Russians under Boulatoff, who were nearest at hand, commenced an assault upon the Ottomans. But the latter, with great skill, had already thrown up some rude works: the thick brushwood with which they were surrounded prevented the advance of the Muscovites in masses; the Ottomans maintained their wonted superiority in bush-fighting; batteries, erected on some heights on the right bank, spread death through the Russian ranks, and under cover of their fire the passage was continued with such vigour that by noon six thousand men, almost all janissaries, and six pieces of cannon, were established on the left bank. Boulatoff, however, was not to be discouraged: having received reinforcements, which raised his force to eight thousand men, he hazarded a third assault, but with no better success. Finally, after losing two thousand of their best troops in this murderous contest, besides a gun and a standard, the Russians retired; and the Turks, with deafening shouts and sabre in hand, sallied out of their intrenchments, and cut off the heads of the slain and the unfortunate wounded.¹

General Sabanejef, during these events, had succeeded in forcing his way through the brushwood, and established a battery within half cannon-shot of the Turkish intrenchment on the left bank, which effectually cut off all communication between it and the remainder of the army on the right. But Kutusoff ordered this advanced position to be abandoned in the night; and, issuing orders in all directions to concentrate round the outside of the intrenchment, brought up his flotilla to cannonade the enemy on the northern shore. It was too late, however, for success in this way: the enemy were now solidly established on the left bank; the flotilla was so roughly handled by the Turkish artillery, that one of the vessels

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¹ Val. 159,
160. Jom.
iii. 543.94.
The Turks
strengthen
their posi-
tion.
Sept. 10.

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Sept. 12.

sank in the river ; the passage of troops continued incessantly, and by the 18th thirty thousand men, with fifty pieces of cannon, were established on the left bank, in a large intrenched camp, with redoubts at its angles. At the same time an equal force on the right, under the Grand Vizier in person, had established a sort of city, in which his tent was conspicuous, decked out with unusual splendour. At this period the Russians around the intrenchment were so weak, that, if Achmet Pasha had fallen vigorously on his opponents, he would probably have gained such decisive success as would have restored Wallachia and Moldavia to the Ottoman arms. But the precious time, big with such portentous events, was consumed in erecting intrenchments round the troops which had passed over ; and, in the mean time, two strong divisions of infantry and a large body of Cossacks came up, which raised the Russian force to thirty-five thousand men. Kutusoff now resolved to take advantage of the exposed situation of the enemy, and, if possible, by cutting off the communication of those passed over to the left bank, compel them to surrender. He allowed the Turks, accordingly, after severe fighting, to extend their camp, and even erect a redoubt a mile in advance of its former limits. But while his troops were lost in astonishment at the supineness of their general, he was preparing, with the secrecy and finesse peculiar to his character, the means of involving the enemy in a signal calamity.¹

¹ Jom. iii.
543. Val.
161, 165.

95.
Kutusoff's
measures to
circumvent
the enemy.

The intention of the Grand Vizier was to have gradually pushed his troops forward, covering themselves with intrenchments and redoubts as they advanced, till he got possession of the village of Malka, about two miles farther on, where there were considerable magazines. This post he meant also to fortify, and thereby acquire a solid footing on the northern bank. To defeat this project, the Russian general, on the night of the 29th, erected four large redoubts in an exterior circle around the Ottoman

Sept. 29.

camp, and these were soon succeeded by eight more. Alarmed at the progress of this line of circumvallation, which in the form of a semicircle enclosed their camp, with both ends resting on the Danube, the Turks, after several bloody combats, erected a new redoubt near the river, to cover their communication with the southern shore ; but the Russians stormed it before the works were finished, and put the garrison, consisting of four hundred Albanians, to the sword. A sally of the Ottomans, immediately made to regain this important post, was repulsed with the loss of above fifteen hundred men. After this severe check the Turks remained quietly within their intrenchments ; while the Russian general erected a ninth redoubt on his extreme right near the Danube, which completed the investment of the Turkish camp, and considerably straitened their communications with the opposite bank of the river.¹

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Oct. 3.

Oct. 4.

¹ Val. 165,
167. Jom.
iii. 543.

As long, however, as the Ottomans had a passage of any sort open to the other side, it was impossible that they could be reduced to any serious difficulties for want of provisions ; and Kutusoff was therefore tempted to hazard an expedition to the other bank, in order, if possible, to dislodge the enemy from the ground on the opposite side, from whence the Grand Vizier's camp was supplied with food and reinforcements. This important operation was intrusted to General Markoff, who with ten thousand men set out from the Russian camp, after dark, on the night of the 10th October, and succeeded early the next morning in throwing his light troops and Cossacks across. The flotilla, which had been ordered to the point in order to transport across the main body, could not get down from the violence of the current ; in consequence of which their passage was delayed for twenty-eight hours, and was not effected till the morning of the 13th. During this time the greatest anxiety prevailed at headquarters, where very scanty information of their proceedings had been received ; but, strange to say,

96.
He crosses
the Danube.

Oct. 10.

Oct. 13.

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¹ Jom. iii.
543. Val.
168, 170.

though the point where the Russians had been disembarked on the right bank was not above six miles from the Ottoman camp there, it remained entirely unknown to its generals. Kutusoff's disquietude, however, was at length dissipated. Markoff, having got over ten battalions and five hundred horse, proceeded instantly to the attack of the Turkish camp on the right bank, leaving the remainder to continue their passage.¹

97.
Surprise and
total defeat
of the Turks
on the right
bank.

The surprise was complete. The Turks, never dreaming of being assailed on their own side, made scarcely any resistance; the civil functionaries of the Grand Vizier, the merchants and traders who thronged the encampment, took to flight in the utmost consternation, and, not deeming themselves in safety at Roudschouck, which had been stripped of nearly all its heavy artillery for the use of the camp, took the road for Rasgrad and Schumla. The magnificent tent of the Grand Vizier, the whole baggage and stores of the army, an immense number of horses, camels, and carriages, and prodigious booty, fell into the hands of the victors, who lost but eight men in this felicitous attack. Markoff, however, without casting a thought on the booty, seized the Turkish batteries, which he turned against the enemy on the other side, where the remainder of the Russian army was drawn up in battle array, witnesses of his triumph; and, while eighty pieces of cannon thundered against the Ottoman camp, demanded with loud cries to be led to the assault.²

² Val. 169,
173. Jom.
iii. 543, 544.

98.
Desperate
situation of
the Turkish
army on the
right bank.

Had Kutusoff possessed the daring of Alexander or Caesar, he would have taken advantage of the enthusiasm of the moment and the consternation of the enemy, and instantly led his troops to the attack of the intrenched camp on the left bank. There can be little doubt that, if this had been done, it would have been carried, and the whole Turkish army destroyed. But his genius was essentially cautious; and he never would owe to hazard what he hoped to gain by combination. Repressing, therefore, the ardour of his troops, he contented himself with

a furious cannonade ; and meanwhile the Grand Vizier himself, who was on the right bank, escaped in a boat to Roudschouck, after in vain proposing an armistice with a view to negotiations for peace. The Pasha Tschooban Ogloo, (Son of the Shepherd,) son of one of the richest princes of Asia Minor, then took the command, and by his firmness and resources in the most trying circumstances, extorted the admiration even of his enemies. The circumstances of the Turks were wholly desperate. The Russian artillery, now augmented to two hundred pieces of cannon, from both sides of the Danube kept up an incessant fire upon them night and day ; a strong flotilla, both above and below, precluded all access or escape by water ; a formidable semicircle of redoubts, with batteries in their interstices, enclosed them on the land side ; their provisions were soon exhausted ; forage there was none for their horses ; their tents were burned for fuel ; and the troops, during the damp nights of autumn, lay on the open ground, exposed to the ceaseless tempest of shot. Yet all these accumulated horrors could not shake the firm mind of the Turkish general. He repeatedly refused the most advantageous offers of capitulation ; and, after having consumed his last horses, he was forming the audacious project of cutting his way by a sudden irruption through the Russian left, and intrenching himself opposite to Roudschouck, and under the shelter of its guns, when a convention concluded at Giurgevo, in the end of October, with a view to a peace between the two powers, put an end to the miseries and saved the honour of these brave men.¹

Oct. 28.
1 Jom. iii.
544. Val.
173, 175.

It was stipulated that they should be fed from the Russian magazines till their fate was finally determined by the plenipotentiaries of the two powers, then assembled at Giurgevo—a condition which was faithfully performed ; and on the 4th December they finally quitted their camp, in virtue of a convention by which they were to evacuate it without their arms or cannon, and be quartered in the

99.
Capitulation of the
Turks.

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Dec. 3.

villages in the neighbourhood of Bucharest, on condition of having them restored only if peace was concluded. The Russians immediately entered the bloodstained intrenchments, the object of such desperate strife; and their interior told how dreadful had been the sufferings of the heroic defenders. The ground was strewed with the dead bodies of men and horses, which the survivors had not possessed sufficient strength to inter; limbs struck off by cannon-shot, broken arms, overturned gun-carriages, and putrid corpses, lay on all sides; the earth even was ploughed up in many places by the shot; but the survivors, though pale and emaciated, still preserved their calm and resolute air. Five thousand, amidst the respect of their enemies, delivered up their arms, with fifty-one guns; above twelve thousand had perished by disease or the sword since the cannonade commenced.¹

¹ Val. 175,
176.

100.
Conclusion
of the cam-
paign in
Little Wal-
lachia.
Sept. 16.

This concluded the operations of the campaign, and put an end to this bloody war, in which both parties had made prodigious efforts, and neither had gained decisive success. In Little Wallachia, Ishmael Bey had invaded the Russian side of the river with thirty thousand men; and General Sass, who commanded in that quarter with very inferior forces, was at one period so hard pressed, that Kutusoff in the middle of September sent him orders to evacuate the province entirely, and join him in his camp before the Grand Vizier; but that general with admirable skill maintained his ground, defeated the enemy in several partial encounters, and at length compelled him to retire back to the left bank, about the same time that the great disaster befell the army of the Grand Vizier in the neighbourhood of Roudschouck.²

² Val. 176,
277. Joni.
iii. 544.

101.
Negotia-
tions for
a peace
between
Russia and
Turkey.

Negotiations in good earnest were carried on for peace; for both parties were sincerely desirous of an accommodation. The Russians, well aware of the formidable contest with Napoleon which was impending over them, were anxious at any price to terminate the hostilities on the Danube; and bring Kutusoff's force to the assistance of

the grand armies on the Niemen. At first sight it might have been supposed, that what it was so much the interest of the Russians to obtain, it could not be for the advantage of the Turks to concede : but in this instance it was otherwise, and the good sense of the Turks triumphed over all the efforts which the French ambassador, Latour Maubourg, made to retain them in hostilities with Russia. By a singular but just retribution, all the powers whose ambassadors or envoys assisted at these conferences were either threatened by, or had been offered a share of, Napoleon's spoiliations ; and their concurring testimony removed all doubt from the minds of the Turkish ministers as to the imminent danger to which they would be exposed if Napoleon should obtain the same supremacy in Eastern which he had long enjoyed in Western Europe.¹

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¹ Jom. iii.
545.

The English made them acquainted with the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, already mentioned ;² whereby, in consideration of the fidelity with which they had adhered to his fortunes during the war in Poland, and through the disasters of Eylau, the French Emperor had not only agreed to the entire partition of their European dominions, Constantinople and Roumelia alone excepted, but had actually stipulated for the largest shares, viz., Greece, the islands of the Archipelago, Albania, and Macedonia, to himself. Russia, a party to that scheme of plunder, and intimately acquainted with all its details, revealed them fully to the Turkish ambassadors ; the secret conferences of Erfurth were made known, and documents bearing the official signatures of the French plenipotentiaries were exhibited to them by Kutusoff, which left no doubt of the truth of these representations. Austria disclosed the offer made to her of Servia and Bosnia, if she would concur in the partition ; while Czerny George, alarmed at the clear proofs which had been adduced of the intention to dethrone him in the scramble,³ gave ample details of the inquiries and

102.
The Turks
are made
acquainted
with Napo-
leon's trea-
cherous de-
signs against
them.
² *Ante*, ch.
xlv. § 78.

³ Val. 178,
180. Jom.
iii. 545.

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¹ *Ande*, ch.
xlvi. § 81.

103.

Peace of
Bucharest.
May 28,
1812.

surveys made by Marshal Marmont, immediately after the treaty of Tilsit, to ascertain the most expedient mode of effecting the conquest of the French share in the partition.¹

Struck by the concurring representations of all these powers, and the clear evidence which was adduced to support them, the Divan no longer hesitated. The Turks saw clearly that if Napoleon gained the mastery of Russia, he would instantly turn the force of both empires against them—that Moscow would be but a step to Constantinople.* They strove hard for a considerable time to obtain restitution of all the provinces conquered by the Russians, in the beginning of the war, to the north of the Danube ; but finding the Russians resolute to retain at least the provinces to the east of the Pruth, and rather to run the hazard of a continuance of the war than consent to their restoration, they at length agreed to allow that river to form the boundary of the two nations, and peace was concluded on these terms in the end of May. The treaty with Russia was speedily followed by one with Great Britain, which was signed on the 18th July. By the first treaty, although the cabinet of St Petersburg lost Wallachia and Moldavia, which they had declared part of their empire, they gained Bessarabia, which gave them the immense advantage, in a contest both with Turkey and Austria, of commanding the mouths of the Danube ; and Admiral Tchichagoff, who had been sent from St Petersburg to conclude the treaty, as Kutusoff's proceedings were esteemed too dilatory, set off from Bucharest for the Vistula on the 31st July, at the head of forty thousand men, who appeared with fatal effect on the great theatre of war at the passage of the Beresina.²

² Jom. iii.
545. Val.
178, 180.
See the
treaty in
Martin, iii.
397, 226.

* "Made aware by my enemies of the stipulations of Erfurth, and by Austria of the *project* for the partition of Turkey which I had proposed to her, the Turks abandoned themselves without reserve to the counsels of England. The British ambassador soon regained all his former credit with the Divan."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoléon*, iii. 545.

Napoleon has repeatedly said that the folly of the Turks in making peace at Bucharest with the Russians, their hereditary enemies, was such that it altogether exceeded the bounds of reasonable calculation ; and therefore that he was not to be blamed for the disastrous consequences which flowed from the appearance of Tchichagoff's army in his rear when he lay at Moscow. In truth, however, the Turks were not in this instance so limited in their political vision as the French writers are desirous to represent ; and their conduct in concluding that treaty was rather the result of that clear judgment and strong common sense which, whenever the facts of a case are distinctly brought before them, has always distinguished the Ottoman councils. They knew well the hostility of Russia, and they had often experienced the weight of her arms ; but they had felt the ingratitude of France ; and the desertion of a friend sinks deeper into the breast than the enmity of a foe. They were aware of their danger from Muscovite ambition ; but they were also no strangers to the power and designs of Napoleon : and they apprehended with reason immediate destruction from his power, if, by subjugating Russia, he was put in a situation to direct the whole resources of Europe against their devoted capital. They never forgot their desertion at Tilsit by the French Emperor, nor the unprovoked project of spoliation on his part which succeeded it : and justly feared that, although the mutual jealousy of the two imperial allies had hitherto preserved them from destruction, they could not look for a continuance of their respite if the forces of both were concentrated in one hand.

The vigorous and unlooked-for resistance which Turkey at this period opposed to all the efforts of the Russians, sufficiently illustrates the elements of strength which at that period lay dormant, till roused by present danger, in the Ottoman empire ; and may perhaps suggest the necessity of modifying some of those opinions as to the declining condition of the power of the Grand Seigneur,

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104.

Reasons
which in-
duced the
Turks to
conclude
this peace.

105.

Great re-
sources ex-
hibited by
Turkey in
this war.

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which have so long been received as political maxims in Europe. When it is recollected that Russia for three years directed her whole force against the Turks ; that in the year 1810 she had a hundred thousand men upon the Danube ; and that this array was composed of the conquerors of Eylau—it certainly appears not a little surprising that the Ottoman empire was not altogether overthrown in the shock. Nevertheless the contest was extremely equal ; and though the forces with which the Ottomans had to contend on the Danube fully equalled those which fronted Napoleon on the Vistula, yet they opposed nearly as effectual resistance to the Muscovite arms as did the conqueror of Western Europe. The contest began on the Danube, and it terminated, after three years' bloodshed, on the same river, with the loss of only one or two frontier towns to the Ottomans. This broad and decisive fact proves, that although the political power of Turkey has unquestionably declined for the last century and a half, and the enormous abuses of its civil government have occasioned during that period a constant diminution in its inhabitants and strength, yet it still possesses great resources when they are fairly drawn forth by impending danger ; and that in the native bravery of its inhabitants is often to be found, as in the British soldiers, more than a compensation for all the errors of their direction or government.

106.
Character of
Sultaun
Mahmoud.

Sultaun Mahmoud, who attempted to arrest this decay, and draw forth, under more enlightened guidance, the still powerful resources of the Ottoman empire, was one of those remarkable men whose character has stamped a mighty impress on the age in which he lived. Albeit bred in the seclusion and effeminacy of the harem, he possessed the native courage and hardihood of his race ; though little informed by education or social intercourse, he had sagacity enough to perceive the increasing inferiority of the Mahometan to the Christian empires, and courage to undertake what was thought to be the remedy.

Instead of ascribing the decline of his dominions, like most of his countrymen, to the irresistible decrees of fate, and submitting to it with the apathy of a predestinarian, he set himself vigorously to avert the evil, and sought, by the destruction of the privileged classes, and the introduction of European discipline and usages, both in civil and military affairs, to communicate to his aged empire a portion of the energy of western civilisation. The contest with ancient habits, inveterate from custom, engrafted upon law, and sanctified by religion, was long and obstinate; and the catastrophe by which it was brought to a close, in the destruction of the janissaries in 1825, one of the most awful recorded in history. Whatever the ultimate effect of that tremendous event may be, it stamped Mahmoud's character for all future ages, and bespoke the fearless energy, the undaunted courage, the unflinching rigour, which, braving the perils that had proved fatal to so many of his race, could thus subdue them all, and fix, by his single hand, a different impress upon the institutions of a vast empire.

Nevertheless Sultaun Mahmoud will not bear a comparison with Peter the Great; and the destruction of the janissaries will, to all appearance, be attended with very different effects from the overthrow of the Muscovite strelitzes. Mahmoud would never have been found in the workshop of Saardam; he was not at the head of his troops under the walls of Varna, nor on the field of Koniah. Political regeneration, difficult in all, is impossible in Mahometan states; the religion and institutions of the Koran preclude the possibility of expansion or alteration; they are inconsistent with the adoption of improvement by foreign usages. The power of Turkey has been irrecoverably broken by the destruction of part and the alienation of the whole of the janissary body. The national resources have been ruined, without the vigour of a different civilisation being acquired; the strength of Asia has been lost, without that of Europe

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107.
Fatal effects
which have
followed his
destruction
of the Janis-
saries.

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being gained. Like the kingdom of Mysore, in Hindostan, the Ottoman empire has sunk to the earth in the attempt to substitute the military system of the west for that of the east. This, accordingly, appeared decisively in the next contest which ensued: the line of the Danube was no longer maintained; the Balkan ceased to be an impassable barrier; in two campaigns, Russia was at Adrianople; in one, the Pasha of Egypt was within a few days' march of Scutari.

108.

Extreme
danger of
making any
change of a
religious
character
in a state.

The janissaries were doubtless a serious evil, and they opposed an impenetrable barrier to every species of improvement; but they constituted the military strength of the nation, they were identified with its religious spirit, they were interwoven with its most venerable institutions. It is one thing to see that a disease has overspread a vital part of the frame; it is another and a very different thing to be able in mature life to cut it out. The real bond of union in every great empire is its religion; it is that which knits together the high and the low, the rich and the poor; it is that which constitutes its vital spirit. Change, even for the better, is generally fatal; the substitution of a true for a false faith, will doubtless benefit mankind, but it will generally subvert the state which makes the alteration. The substitution of Christianity itself for heathenism, undoubtedly accelerated the fall of the Roman empire. Let every state which has attained mature years, and consolidated its power, beware of making a great innovation in its institutions, especially of a religious character. Even though those which are introduced may be preferable in the general case to those which are abandoned, it is rare that the transition can be made with safety. A certain character has been imprinted by the hand of nature upon every old-established nation, as upon every full-grown individual, and any considerable change will only accelerate the descent of both to the grave.

CHAPTER LXX.

ACCESSION OF BERNADOTTE TO THE SWEDISH THRONE, AND
CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE RUSSIAN WAR OF 1812.

IN former days, Sweden maintained a distinguished place in the European commonwealth; and she can number among her sons some of the most illustrious men whom modern times have produced. The Goths, who spread through Poland and the Ukraine into the Roman provinces, and appeared as suppliants on the banks of the Danube, from whence they were ferried across by Roman hands never to return, originally came from the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula. The present name of the province of Gothland still attests the original seat of the conquerors of Rome. On many occasions, their descendants, who remained in their native plains, have caused their prowess to be felt, and their virtues to be respected, by the neighbouring nations. On others, they interfered with decisive effect in the most interesting contests in which Europe has been engaged. The name of Gustavus Vasa is still repeated in every civilised tongue, among the patriot heroes whose actions have contributed to bless mankind; Protestant Europe will ever acknowledge, with gratitude, the inestimable services rendered to the great cause of religious, and through it of civil freedom, by the heroic valour and warlike abilities of Gustavus Adolphus; and the interest of youth to the end of the world will be fascinated by

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1.
Greatness
of Sweden
in former
times.

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the romantic story of Charles XII., who rivalled Napoleon in the daring of his spirit, and outstripped him in the marvels of his victories. Nor will the student of the military art study with less care the history of those wonderful abilities which enabled the little kingdom of Sweden, with hardly two millions of souls, to render its armies a match, and at one period more than a match, for the gigantic strength of Russia, led by the consummate talents of Peter the Great. Science has equal reason to acknowledge the lustre with which the light of Swedish genius has illuminated the long night of the Arctic circle: for she gave birth to Berzelius, the first of modern chemists; and in Linnaeus she has for ever unfolded the hidden key by which the endless variety of floral beauty is to be classified, and the mode in which the mysterious link is preserved between vegetable and animal life.

2.
Description
of the Scan-
dinavian
peninsula.

But with the advent of times when greater empires were brought into the field, and the wars of nations came to be carried on by numerous standing armies, drawn from the population and maintained by the resources of vast empires, Sweden was unable to maintain this elevated station. Her physical resources are wholly inadequate for such protracted efforts; and the attempt which Charles XII. made to engage her in long and arduous wars, so completely drained the resources of the country, that they did not recover the loss for half a century. The population of the Swedish monarchy in 1808,* including Finland, was hardly three millions, and these scanty numbers were scattered over so vast an extent of surface—above three

	Square miles.	Population.
* Sweden Proper now contains,	200,000	2,800,000
Finland,	102,432	1,380,000
Total in 1826,	302,432	3,680,000
Do. in 1808, about		3,000,000
Population per square mile,	12	
Do. in England, by Census 1841,	290	
—MALTE-BRUN, viii. 561, 565; and vi. 631.		

times that of the British isles—as greatly to diminish their efficiency in external warfare. The country, however, possesses, in some respects, great natural advantages. Though the climate, from its situation, is rigorous in winter, yet it is often less so than might have been supposed in so northern a latitude; the cold damp fogs of Germany are wanting; the bottoms of the valleys in Gothland and the southern provinces, which are the residence of two-thirds of the inhabitants of the country, are capable of producing admirable crops of wheat, barley, and oats; rich pastures are to be found on the hill-sides; and the vast mountain ranges which it contains are clothed with noble forests of pine, birch, and oak.¹

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¹ Malte-
Brun. viii.
557, 542.

A lofty range of mountains, rivalling the Alps in grandeur and elevation, intersects the whole Scandinavian peninsula, nearly from the North Cape to the waters of the Sound, and forms the eternal barrier between Sweden and Norway. But the descent to the Baltic is more gradual than that to the German ocean, and a much greater quantity of level and arable land is to be found there than in the mountain clefts and alpine vales which enclose the happy Norwegian peasantry. The level part of Sweden is intersected in many places by long ridges of granite rock of no great elevation, which form, as it were, the natural walls of its beautiful valleys; but within these rude barriers, smiling spots of verdure and fertile fields are to be found, while rich woods of beech and oak frequently clothe their base. A vast number of inland lakes, easily susceptible of artificial communication, both diversify the scene in the interior, and furnish the means of an extensive inland commerce; productive iron mines have long poured a perennial stream of wealth into Dalecarlia; and farther to the north, where the rigour of the climate almost precludes the raising of grain crops, the bounty of nature has given a short but warm summer, which brings to maturity the richest pastures. Innumerable lakes and mountain torrents there furnish,

3.

Its ranges of
mountains
and plains.

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¹ Aerbis's
Travels, i.
324, 441.
Clarke's
Travels, ix.
172. Malte-
Brun, viii.
537, 549.

by their fish, acceptable stores for the long winter; the heat of the brief summer, often exceeding that of Italy, secures ample food for the cattle during the whole year; nor is a more delightful picture of human happiness any where to be found than in those woody recesses where human industry has cleared out a few green spots amidst the surrounding gloom, and unsophisticated man dwells in plenty and contentment,¹

—"Inter aquas
Nemorumque noctern."*

4.
Political
circum-
stances of
the Swedes.

The political circumstances of this highly interesting country are not less favourable than its physical advantages. The ancient free spirit of the north—that noble spirit which has spread the European race through every part of the world, and is ultimately destined to subdue it—has always flourished in its native seats. From the earliest times, Sweden has enjoyed the advantage of a free constitution and representative form of government; and although the want of considerable towns and the absence of the mercantile genius, over the greater part of its territory, has prevented the vigour of the proper democratic fervour from rising in its cities, yet the rural cultivators have always preserved in a high degree the sturdy principles of Gothic liberty. The throne is hereditary; but its power is defined and limited by the constitution. The States of the realm must concur in all laws; they are exclusively vested with the right of laying on taxes and managing the public revenue. They consist of four orders; the noblesse, in which each noble family has a representative; the clergy, represented by the bishops and certain deputies from the rural pastors; the burgesses, chosen by the several burghs; and the representatives of the peasants, elected by themselves in open assemblies. The people are universally educated; landed property, especially in the northern provinces, is very

* "Midst waters
And the night of the groves."

much divided among them ; and no country in the world possesses, in proportion to its population, a greater number of clergy, who instruct the people in the pure tenets of the Protestant religion. Yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, of all others the most favourable for the development of the principles of freedom, and despite the presence of a House of Peasants, peculiar, of all the European monarchies, to Sweden and Norway, many of its monarchs have ruled the country with almost unlimited authority ; and it is only since the constitution was settled, in 1772, that the definite boundaries of power have been ascertained. The luminous fact, that the States, except on particular emergencies, assemble only once in five years, demonstrates how far the popular part of the constitution is from having yet attained the importance and consideration which it long ago acquired in the commercial realm of Great Britain. It may teach us how materially the practice of government sometimes differs from its theory, and how much real freedom is dependent on the spirit and energy of the people, rather than the mere forms of the constitution.¹

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1808.

¹ Malte-
Brun, viii.
557, 558.

Industry, till of late years, was very little drawn forth in Sweden. In 1828 there were only seven thousand manufacturers in the whole country, and three thousand traders—a state of things which amply explains the distant intervals at which the States are assembled, and the great functions which, in the practical administration of government, have come to devolve on the sovereign and royal council. But the national character is admirable, and the manners of the people, except in one unhappy particular, worthy of general imitation. Brave, kind-hearted, and hospitable, sincere in their devotion, enlightened, when duly instructed, in their intellects, gentle in their disposition, obedient to the laws, and yet jealous of their own rights ; the Swedish peasantry exhibit as fair a specimen of European rural civilisation as is to be met with in the whole domains of the family

5.
Character
of the
Swedes.

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of Japhet. But one fatal indulgence has wellnigh obliterated all these advantages, and let in upon this simple, kind-hearted people the whole catalogue of human sins. Drinking is universal: the liberty of distilling in every separate house, on paying a trifling duty to government for the right to use a still, has from time immemorial been established among the whole peasantry of the country; and at this moment there are no less than one hundred and fifty thousand of these manufactories of "liquid hell-fire," as they have been well denominated, which distil annually *thirty millions* of gallons of spirits for the consumption of three millions of people.¹

¹ Laing's
Sweden,
322. Malte-
Brun, viii.
565.

6.
Disastrous
effects of
the intempe-
rance which
prevails.

The consequences of this calamitous facility in producing and obtaining spirituous liquors have been to the last degree disastrous. Notwithstanding the small number of manufactures which are established in the country, the general simplicity of rural life, the absence of great towns, and the moderate size of its capital, which contains only eighty thousand inhabitants, the average amount of crime over all Sweden equals that of the most depraved cities in Great Britain. The illegitimate births are to the legitimate, over the whole country, as one to thirteen; while in the capital they have reached the astonishing number of one to two and three-tenths, exceeding even the proportion of Paris itself! So fearfully does this destructive passion for ardent spirits inflame the blood, and generate crime, even in the coldest latitudes; so perfectly adequate is it to counteract all the efforts of reason, prudence, morality, and religion; and so deplorably fallacious is the system, which, proceeding on the mistaken assumption that the people will of themselves abstain from such enjoyments as are pernicious, allows them to manufacture, without limit or restraint, this most seducing and dreadful of all physical and moral poisons.^{2*}

² Malte-
Brun, viii.
565. Laing's
Sweden,
113, 322,
323.

* The illegitimate births in Sweden, over the whole country, are to the legitimate as one to thirteen.—MALTE-BRUN, viii. 565. In Middlesex it is one

The Scandinavian peninsula, now happily united in one monarchy, numbering about four millions and a half of souls in its united territory, increasing at the rate, as it now does, of doubling in sixty years,¹ separated from Russia by the impassable deserts which surround the Gulf of Bothnia, and from all the rest of the world by the encircling ocean, may reasonably hope, with the aid of England, to be ultimately able to maintain its independence. But the case was widely different in 1808, when Norway formed part of a separate and hostile power, and the valuable possessions of the Swedish crown on the other side of the Baltic lay close to the metropolis and power of Russia. The cabinet of St Petersburg had long beheld with covetous eyes this valuable province, running up, as it were, to the very gates of their capital, embracing the noble fortress of Sweaborg, the key to the northern part of the Baltic, in its territory, and alone wanting to render that inland sea the boundary of their dominions from the mouths of the Vistula to the provinces bordering on the Frozen Ocean. They had never forgotten, that in the last war with Sweden the cannon of the Swedish fleet had been heard by the Empress Catharine in her own palace at St Petersburg; and they were feelingly alive to the insult as well as danger to which their capital would be always exposed, while it was situated so close to the territory of a neighbouring and sometimes hostile power. It has been already mentioned, accordingly, that the cabinet of St Petersburg lost

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1808.

7.

Unprecedented attack upon Sweden by Russia.

¹ Malte-Brun, viii. 565.

In 1789.

to thirty-eight; over all England, one to twenty.—PORTER, i. 21. The proportion of serious crime over Gothland, to the whole population, is as one to four hundred and eighty four. In Glasgow, in the year 1839, it was as one to four hundred and ninety-six. Over all Sweden, the persons committed for all offences, serious and trifling, are in the ratio of one in one hundred and seventy, a greater proportion than either England or Scotland. LAING'S *Sweden*, 112, 113, 323. Mr Laing's work on this subject, though valuable in many respects, is, however, entirely fallacious, if not examined by a person familiar with the subject, from its comparing the total committals in Sweden with the committals for trial in England and Scotland; keeping out of view the summary convictions in the latter countries, which are at least five times as numerous.

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LXX.

1808.
Feb. 6,
1808.

1 *Ande*, ch.
ii. § 46.

8.
Brave de-
termination
of the
Swedes to
resist this
aggression.

Feb. 28.

March 11.

March 28.
2 *Hard*. x.
277. *Jom*.
iii. 73, 74.

no time in declaring war against Sweden early in 1808, and immediately invading Finland with a large portion of the troops who had been rendered disposable by the termination of the war in Poland; although they could assign no better reason for their hostility than the honourable adherence of the court of Stockholm to those principles and that cause which they themselves had so recently supported, and from which they had only been driven by the untoward issue of the battle of Friedland.¹ But the real reason was the agreement formed by the two Emperors at Tilsit for the division of the Continent between them; by which Alexander had got a *carte blanche* as to Finland and part of Turkey, in consideration of Napoleon getting the same as to the Spanish peninsula.

However much the patriot historians of Sweden, whose first duty is to have the interests of their country chiefly at heart, may with reason regret the determination which the Swedish monarch at this crisis adopted of holding out, and at all hazards standing by his engagements, the general historian of Europe cannot but regard it as a signal instance of magnanimity, and such as, if it had been general among crowned heads and their ministers, would have achieved, years before it actually occurred, the deliverance of Europe. In this determination the King was supported, with mournful resolution, by the Swedish nation and parliament, although the circumstances of Northern Europe left hardly any hope that they could succeed in braving the hostility of their colossal neighbours. In effect, it soon appeared that the determination of the Czar drew after it the hostility of all the Baltic powers. Denmark declared war a few days after Buxhowden's proclamation on the part of Russia, and Prussia did the same on the 11th March. But the determination of the cabinet of St Petersburg, to unite Finland at all risks to their dominions, was the real motive which had led to the war;² for on the 28th of the same month an imperial ukase appeared at St Petersburg, which bore

—“ We unite Finland, conquered by our arms, for ever to our empire, and command its inhabitants forthwith to take the oath of allegiance to our throne.”

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Although the Russians were very far indeed from having conquered Finland at the time when this audacious proclamation was issued, requiring its inhabitants, before any treaty had been signed, or any cession made by their legitimate monarch, to take the oath of allegiance to their new masters, yet the success of their arms had been such as to justify the belief that the whole provinces on the eastern shore of the Baltic would ere long be in their possession. The King of Sweden, brave, chivalrous, confiding even to excess, and trusting that he would find the same good faith, at least in legitimate monarchs, which he felt in his own bosom, never could be brought to believe that he would become an object of hostility to Russia, merely because he continued faithful to his engagements, and the honour which he had pledged to that power. He had made, accordingly, very little preparation for the defence of Finland; and the Russian government, well aware of that circumstance, resolved to precipitate the attack before he had awakened from his dream of high-minded but credulous simplicity. Early in February 1808, Buxhowden, disregarding the rigours of a winter of unusual severity, entered Finland at the head of an army of twenty thousand Russians. The Swedish troops, in no condition to make head against so formidable an enemy, were obliged to retreat; and the fortresses of Trevastus, Helsingfors, and ultimately Abo, the capital of the province, fell into the hands of the invaders. In the harbour of the latter town the great fleet of Swedish galleys was burned to prevent it from falling into the hands of the enemy.¹

9.
Capture of
Abo, and
conquest of
Finland.

Feb. 9.
1808.

Feb. 21.
March 2.

¹ Bign. vii.
351. Journ.
iii. 75.

Encouraged by these successes, the Russian general approached Sweaborg, the Gibraltar of the north—a fortress of the first order, built upon seven rocky islands altogether detached from the shore, strongly fortified

10.
Treachorous
surrender of
Sweaborg.

CHAP.
LXX.

1808.

March 8.

April 6.

¹ Bign. vii.
351, 352.
Jom. iii.
75, 76.

11.
Consternation
produced in
Sweden by
this event.

with seven hundred pieces of cannon on the ramparts ; containing the great naval and military arsenal of Finland, and a harbour equal to any in the world for capaciousness and depth. It was garrisoned by three thousand regular troops, and an equal number of militia, under the command of Admiral Cronstedt, an officer who had hitherto borne an unblemished reputation. But it soon appeared that if Alexander hoped to rival his great predecessor of the same name in the ancient world by the lustre of his military exploits, he had not neglected the golden key by which the father of that conqueror, at little cost of blood or treasure, secured such important acquisitions to the Macedonian monarchy. The investment of Sweaborg commenced in the first week of March, when the still frozen waves of the Baltic permitted the troops to approach the walls on their icy surface ; and after a shadow of a bombardment of three weeks' duration, the governor shamefully surrendered at discretion. By this great blow the Russians became masters—in addition to an impregnable fortress, a noble harbour, and vast arsenal of two thousand pieces of cannon on the ramparts and in the magazines—of a large flotilla, which the governor had orders to burn rather than suffer it to fall into the hands of the enemy.^{1*}

This dreadful blow, which at once gave the Russians a firm footing in Finland, where before the end of the campaign in that year their forces were augmented to forty thousand men, subdued the spirit of the Swedes. The danger of their situation soon became apparent from the capture of the important islands of Aland and Gothland, which took place immediately after, whereby the Muscovites acquired, as it were, so many stepping-stones across the Baltic, from which they might menace the independence of Sweden itself. Universal consternation in con-

* His instructions were precise : to defend the fortress to the last extremity, and burn the flotilla rather than permit it to fall into the hands of the enemy.
—*Mem. de GUSTAVE ADOLPHE*, 1814, p. 16.

sequence prevailed ; nor was this feeling of disquietude diminished by observing how insensible the King was to the manifest danger of his situation. Instead of supporting the troops in Finland, who so gallantly bore up against treason at Sweaborg, and the overwhelming numbers of the enemy in the field, he first alienated the whole diplomatic body in Europe, by arresting, early in March, M. Alopæus, the Russian minister at Stockholm —a violation of the laws of nations, noways justified by the Muscovite invasion of Finland, as the ambassador, at least, had no share in that unjustifiable aggression ; and next, dreaming of Charles XII. and the conquest of Norway, he actually, in the midst of his misfortunes, assembled twenty thousand men for the subjugation of that kingdom. Nor was the depression produced by those untoward events, and the general coalition of Northern Europe against them, diminished by the unexpected turn which, in the course of the summer, events took in their favour. Aland and Gothland, which had yielded to the Russian arms, were retaken in May, as soon as the opening of the Baltic enabled the Swedish fleet, reinforced by a British squadron, to put to sea ; and Admiral Bodiskoff, and the Muscovite garrison, were made prisoners.¹

March 3.

¹ Bign. vii.
352, 354.
Jom. iii.
77, 79.

General Klingspor also, at the head of the Swedish troops in Finland, after having retreated as far as Uleaborg, boldly resumed the offensive ; turned fiercely on his pursuers, and reinforcing his army by a large body of gallant peasants, who fought with heroic valour to avert the dreaded Muscovite yoke, forced the Russians to retreat, defeated them in several encounters, captured ninety-nine pieces of cannon, and expelled them from the whole province of East Bothnia. At sea, also, the Swedish arms prevailed over those of Russia. Admiral Kanikoff set sail with the Muscovite fleet, and omitted no opportunity of attacking the Swedish squadron with superior forces ; but the next day, the British fleet, under

12.
Successes of
the Swedes
in Finland,
and of the
British at
sea.
May 17.
July 7.

CHAP.
LXX.1808.
July 29.

Sir James de Saumarez, having joined the Swedes with some ships of the line, the Russian admiral was glad to make the best of his way to his own harbours. A chase ensued, in the course of which two British line-of-battle ships, under Sir Samuel Hood, took a Russian seventy-four gun ship; and the admiral having, with signal incapacity, sought refuge in the open harbour of Baltisch Port, on the Russian coast, his whole fleet might with ease have been destroyed. But the British commander, prudently, and agreeably to his instructions, abstained from an act which, how glorious soever, might have inflamed the national feeling of Russia, and converted a doubtful into a real enemy. He therefore contented himself with blockading it there, till the approach of winter obliged him to withdraw from the Baltic.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 237.
Bign. vii.
359, 365.
Hard. x.
278.

13.
British ex-
pedition to
Sweden.

The cabinet of St Petersburg strongly urged Napoleon to take an active part in the Swedish war, by means of the powerful force he possessed in Holstein; and, in consequence of their representations, Bernadotte entered Zealand at the head of thirty thousand men, among whom were the Spanish corps of the Marquis of Romana, who were shortly after rescued from their thralldom, as already noticed, and restored to the patriot standards in the Peninsula.² The French Emperor, though abundantly willing to take his own share in the partition, had no desire to accelerate the period of Russia obtaining hers; and he accordingly wrote from Bayonne to Caulaincourt, his ambassador at St Petersburg,—“I have nothing to gain by seeing the Russians at Stockholm.” But the British government, who were not aware of this reluctance, were seriously apprehensive of the passage of the Sound by the French troops, and the entire subjugation of Sweden by the arms of France; and therefore they despatched an expedition of ten thousand men, under Sir John Moore, to assist Sweden in resisting the combined powers, which arrived at Goteborg in the middle of May. It was soon discovered, however, that the

² *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 89.

Aug. 9.

May 22.

views of the cabinet of St James's and those of the Swedish monarch were widely at variance as to the disposal of this force. Gustavus, full of chivalrous enthusiasm, no sooner saw so considerable a body of troops arrive to his assistance, than he began to dream of foreign conquest; and proposed to the British general, either to employ them in a descent upon Zealand, with a view to the reduction of Copenhagen, or in an expedition against Norway, or in an attack on one of the fortresses on the coast of Finland, and subsequent operations for the recovery of that province.¹

CHAP.
LXX.
1808.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 227.
238. Hard.
273, 280.
Bign. vi.
357, 359.

Moore's instructions, however, which were to expose his troops as little as was consistent with the maintenance of the independence of Sweden, and mainly to watch against the passage of the Sound by the French troops, would not permit him to engage in any of these enterprises; and after repairing to Stockholm, with a view to concert operations with the King, which proved impossible, he was recalled, with his troops, by the British government, who perceived a more feasible point for continental operations in the Spanish peninsula, where they arrived, as already noticed, immediately after the battle of Vimeira.² The departure of the English expedition completed the discouragement of the Swedish nation, by plainly evincing that, in the estimation of that power, their cause was considered as hopeless, or their King impracticable. The glorious successes in the Gulf of Bothnia had shot only like a brilliant meteor through the gloom of their night; the Russian government, roused by their unexpected reverses, had poured immense reinforcements into Finland; Buxhowden, at the head of forty thousand men, compelled the Swedish troops again to retire, and by the end of October had nearly overrun the whole province; and the brave Klingspor, unable any longer to avert the stroke of fate, was compelled, in November, to sign a convention,³ in virtue of which the whole of Finland to

14.
Finland is
surrendered
by conven-
tion.
July 17.

² *Ante*, ch.
liv. § 74.

Nov. 19.
³ Ann. Reg.
1808, 237.
238. Bign.
vi. 357, 361.
Hard. x.
278, 282.
Jom. iii.
76, 78.

CHAP.
LXX.

1808.

15.
General
wish for a
change of
government.

the east of the Gulf of Bothnia was ceded to the Russian forces.

These calamitous events, which affected the Swedes the more sensibly from the warmth of their patriotic feelings, and their long exemption from political catastrophes, produced a very general opinion among the most influential classes, that a change on the throne had become indispensable. It soon became generally known that, undeterred by the loss of Pomerania and Finland, the brightest jewels in his crown, Gustavus was determined to disregard the convention concluded in Finland by his generals, and renew the war in the following year, as early as the season would admit; and the Swedes, seeing that the British expedition had left their shores, and that the whole forces of that power were engaged in the Peninsular contest, justly anticipated the entire subjugation of their country, and ruin of their independence, if the strife were any longer continued. Influenced by these considerations, which the urgency of the case soon rendered general, and swayed also not a little by a suspicion as to the sanity of the monarch, which many symptoms had rendered more than doubtful, a general understanding, as in England in 1688, took place among all parties, and for a time suspended their political differences. The basis of this was the position that the dethronement of the reigning monarch, and the elevation of his uncle, the Duke of Sudermania, to the throne, had become indispensable; and this virtual, though not yet expressly formed, conspiracy soon acquired consistency, and became ripe for execution, by the leading officers in the army engaging in it.¹

¹ Bign. viii.
159, 160.
Hard. x.
279, 280.
Mem. de
Charles
Jean, i. 103,
104, par St
Donat.

16.
The British
government
decline the
crown.

The real object of the conspirators was to obtain for Sweden the support of some foreign power able to uphold its independence against the united forces of France and Russia, and for this purpose they offered the crown to the Duke of Gloucester. But the British government wisely declined, at so critical a moment, an acquisition

which, however flattering to the national character, was likely in the end to embroil them with the northern courts, and would have been contrary to all the principles on which they had hitherto maintained the contest with France. They therefore declined the perilous offer. The same party then applied to Napoleon; but he replied, in an evasive manner, that his honour was pledged to the Emperor of Russia and the Prince-Royal of Denmark. The Swedish malcontents, therefore, were compelled to trust to their own resources for the maintenance of their independence; and there can be no doubt that, in the course which they adopted, they acted the part of good patriots, when the great dangers with which they were surrounded, and the imminent hazard of the independence of their country being irrevocably destroyed, are taken into account.¹

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¹ St Donat,
Mem. de
Charles
Jean, i.
105.

The army on the Norwegian frontier was the first to declare itself. Early in March, Colonel Aldesparre set out himself from that force at the head of three thousand men, and marched upon Stockholm, while the remainder of the troops took possession of Goteborg, and the principal harbours in the southern provinces of the kingdom. No sooner was Gustavus informed of these events, which were accompanied by a violent popular fermentation at Stockholm, than he quitted his country place at Haga, where he happened to be at the time, and hastened to the capital, where he shut himself up in his palace, all the avenues of which were strongly occupied by his guards. The King, however, soon found that even these faithful defenders could not be relied on; the night was passed in great agitation, and in giving the most contradictory orders. The great object of the unhappy monarch, upon finding himself deserted by all his subjects, was to get the command of relays of horses, and to raise some money for his immediate necessities upon the credit of the English subsidies. But he soon found it impossible to attain either of these objects. At the same time,

17.
Measures of
the conspir-
ators.
March 7.

March 13.

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1809.

¹ St Donat,
Mem. de
Charles
Jean, i.
105, 108.
Bign. viii.
161, 162.
Hard. x.
232, 234.

the committee of insurrection in Stockholm, which embraced all the principal men in the capital, particularly the Baron d'Adlercrantz, who justly enjoyed a large share of public confidence, and General Klingspor, recently so distinguished by his defence of the province of Bothnia, deemed it of essential importance not to permit the monarch to quit the capital. And the keepers of the public treasury prevented the King from getting any money, by refusing to discharge any orders which had not the authority of the States of the kingdom.¹

18.
Arrest of
the King.

In this extremity, as Gustavus still persevered in his resolution to quit the capital, and as the Duke of Sudermania could not prevail upon him to abandon his design, the Baron Adlercrantz and General Klingspor, whose connexion with the insurgents was not known, were called in to assist in the deliberations. The former began an energetic remonstrance against the King's proposed departure, in the middle of which he was interrupted by Gustavus, who exclaimed—"Treason! Treason! You shall all be punished as you deserve."—"We are not traitors," replied the Baron calmly, "but good Swedes, intent only on the happiness of your majesty and of the country." At these words, the King drew his sword and threw himself on the Baron; but the latter avoided the lounge and seized the monarch by the middle, while Colonel Silfesparré got possession of his sword. "Rescue, rescue!" cried the King. "I am assassinated." Upon hearing his cries, the guards outside attempted to enter, and, finding the door of the apartment locked, they were proceeding to break it open; upon which the undaunted Adlercrantz himself unlocked it, and seizing the sabre of a hussar who stood near, and the baton, the ensign of command of the adjutant-general of the guards, threw himself before the troops, who had their swords drawn, and exclaimed in a loud voice, "I am now your adjutant-general, and in that quality I command you, guards, to retire."² The King himself also, from a feeling of humanity, to prevent the

² St Donat,
i. 109, 112.
Bign. viii.
161.

useless effusion of blood, made a motion with his hand for them to withdraw.

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1809.

19.
And his re-
signation of
the crown.

Overawed by his manner, and conceiving the monarch deposed, the guards retired; but in the confusion the King had made his escape by a back-door which communicated with a postern stair, and seized in his flight the sword of Count Stromfield. Thus armed anew, he was running across the inner court of the palace towards a guard-house, where he would immediately have found troops ready to support him, when he was met by a forester of the name of Grieff, who threw himself in his way, and, though wounded in the arm, continued to hold the King until some of the conspirators arrived, by whom he was disarmed a second time, and reconducted into the state apartments. The Duke of Sudermania was immediately proclaimed regent; next day the King was conducted as a prisoner to the Castle of Drottingholm, from whence he was transferred to the palace of Gripsholm, from which a fortnight after there appeared his formal renunciation of the crown, grounded on the alleged impossibility of continuing the government in a manner consistent with the interests of the kingdom. So completely were the public in Stockholm prepared for this event, that no disturbances whatever took place there on the change of dynasty; and even the theatres of Stockholm were open on the night on which it occurred, as if nothing unusual had happened.¹ *

¹ St Donat,
i. 109, 113.
Bign. viii.
161, 163.

This violent but bloodless revolution was immediately followed by the elevation of Adlercrantz, Klingspor, and Aldesparre to the highest offices in the Swedish ministry.

* Suspicions had always been entertained of the legitimacy of Gustavus the Fourth; and a story is told by some historians, that in an interview between the Queen-mother and the deposed monarch she revealed to him the secret of his birth, and that, to conceal her shame, the King was prevailed upon voluntarily to abdicate the throne. No evidence, however, is adduced to give countenance to this rumour, which rests upon a very suspicious authority, considering the interest which his successors on the throne have to throw doubts on the legitimacy of the deposed monarch.—ST-DONAT, i. 3; and BIGNON, viii. 163, note.

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20.
Elevation of
the Duke of
Sudermania
to the
throne.
May 3.

On the 3d of May the monarch was formally deposed by the States of the kingdom, and on the 5th of June the Duke of Sudermania was proclaimed King. The States of the kingdom deposed not only the dethroned monarch, but his whole race,* and nothing remained but to declare his successor, who ascended the throne by the title of Charles the Thirteenth. The first care of the new monarch was to conclude a peace with Russia; and in order the better to attain that object, he wrote to Napoleon, stating "that he placed the integrity of the Swedish throne under the safeguard of the generosity of Napoleon."¹ The French Emperor, however, who was at that instant engaged in a doubtful war with Austria on the shores of the Danube, had no inclination to embroil himself with the court of St Petersburg on account of the integrity of Sweden; and in addition to that, he was expressly bound, by the conferences at Tilsit, to surrender Finland to Russia, in consideration of himself being permitted to seize upon the Spanish peninsula. Napoleon, therefore, turned a deaf ear to the petition of the Swedish monarch; and the cabinet of St Petersburg, determined to keep their prey, notified to the court of Stockholm that they were about immediately to resume hostilities.²

¹ Letter of
July 20,
1809.

² Bign. viii.
168. Hard.
x. 288, 289.

The Swedes were in no condition to make any resistance; for independently of the paralysis of their national strength which had arisen from the change of dynasty, and the universal desire for immediate peace to which it

* "We abjure by this present act all the fidelity and obedience which we owe to our King, Gustavus the Fourth, hitherto King of Sweden, and we declare both him and his heirs, born, or to be born, now and for ever deposed from the throne and government of Sweden." This is perhaps the most open and undisguised dethronement of a monarch by the States of a kingdom which is recorded in history; and it is not a little remarkable, that it not only was accomplished without the death of the reigning monarch, but without the spilling of a single drop of blood on the part of his subjects. The Swedish historians may well take pride in the dignity, unanimity, and humanity of this great national movement, which offers so marked and pleasing a contrast to the dreadful convulsions that, both in England and France, followed the dethronement of the reigning monarch, and the hideous royal murders by which they were both consummated.—See BIGNON, viii. 164; and MONTGAILLARD, vi. 397, 398.

had been owing, the Russians had gained an extraordinary advantage in the spring of that year. This was by the bold march of a general destined to the highest celebrity in future times, Count Barclay de Tolly, who, taking advantage of the severe frost of spring 1809, had the hardihood to cross the Gulf of Bothnia on the ice, and had arrived in the middle of March on the Swedish side as far as Golby, on the road to Stockholm. This extraordinary event, which alone was wanting to complete the marvels of the French Revolutionary war, put a decisive period, as well it might, to the contest in the Scandinavian peninsula. The cabinet of St Petersburg was inexorable; the entire cession of Finland was resolved on; and on these terms peace was at length concluded on the 17th of September. By this treaty Russia acquired Finland, the isles of Aland, Savollax, Quirille, and some lesser ones in the Baltic, and the whole province of West Bothnia, as far as Tornea, at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, and from thence, by the course of the river Jocki, almost to the shores of the Frozen Ocean. The cabinet of Stockholm also declared its accession to the Continental System; and in return for so many concessions, the duchy of Pomerania was restored to the Swedish crown, and Prince Holstein Augustenburg, son of the Duke of Holstein Augustenburg, was declared the Crown Prince, or, in other words, the successor to the throne. This treaty was shortly afterwards followed by the conclusion of a treaty between Sweden and France, the only remarkable feature of which was the extraordinary rigour with which the Continental System was imposed upon the Swedish monarchy.¹

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1809.

21.

Peace between Sweden and Russia.
March 7.Sept. 17,
1809.

¹ See the treaties in Marten's Sup. i. 19, 232. Hard. x. 288, 290. Bign. viii. 168, ix. 201.

The flames of war appeared now to be finally stilled on the shores of the Baltic; and Sweden, adhering to the policy of endeavouring to procure a counterpoise in the friendship of France against the exorbitant power of Russia, had made secret proposals to Napoleon for an alliance between the Prince Augustenburg, the heir-

22.

Death of the Crown Prince of Sweden.

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1810.

May 13,
1810.

apparent to the throne, and a princess of the imperial family of France. This proposition, however, was coldly received by Napoleon, who had no inclination to precipitate the contest which he saw would sooner or later arise with the Russian empire. But all these projects were rendered abortive by the sudden death of the young prince, who was seized with a stroke of apoplexy on horseback, when reviewing a regiment of guards at Quidinge in Holstein, and died immediately after. This unexpected event, as it deprived Sweden of a successor to the throne, immediately opened up a vast field for intrigue in the north of Europe; and various efforts were made to procure the election of different persons to the dignity, which would secure the ultimate ascent to the Swedish throne. The right of election was vested in the States of Sweden; but it was easy to see that they would be swayed by external influence in their choice, and the two powers between whom the contest necessarily lay, were France and Russia.¹

¹ St Donat, i. 119. Bign. ix. 207. Hard. xi. 123.

23.
Intrigues for the election of his successor. Part which France and Russia took in them.

It was obviously the interest of Russia to place on the throne of Sweden a prince who might incline to its protection in any political crisis that might arise, and the secret wishes of that power lay towards the young prince, son of the late King. But there was an obvious difficulty in obtaining the consent of the Swedish parliament to a measure, the effect of which might be to involve almost all the leading men in the kingdom, at some future period, in the penalties of high treason. The principal object of Napoleon was to secure, in the successor to the Swedish throne, some counterpoise to the power of the Czar; for, amidst all the professions of mutual regard by the two emperors, their interests had already begun to clash, and symptoms of estrangement already appeared in their diplomatic intercourse with each other. Candidates, however, were not wanting for the situation. The King of Denmark openly aspired to the honour, and endeavoured to impress upon Napoleon the great political advantage

which would arise to France from the union of the three crowns of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, on one head, as a counterpoise to the power of Russia. But the King of Sweden, well aware that such a project would be viewed with extreme repugnance by the nobles and people of Sweden, who were actuated by a jealousy of very old standing towards their Danish and Norwegian neighbours, inclined towards the young prince of Holstein Augustenburg, younger brother of him who had just perished. In a secret correspondence with Napoleon, he disclosed his wishes to the Emperor, who professed himself favourable to the design, and gave the most flattering assurances of his support; observing, in particular, the advantages it would bring to both countries to have the royal families of Sweden and Denmark united by closer ties. But the King of Denmark, who was brother-in-law to the Prince of Augustenburg, prohibited him from acceding to the wishes of the King of Sweden, and openly set forth his own pretensions to the dignity, in a letter to the latter monarch.¹

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1810.

¹ Letter, Prince of Holstein to Charles XIII., July 17; and King of Denmark to King of Sweden, July 18, 1810. Bign. ix. 210, 213.

Matters were still in a state of uncertainty at Stockholm, when an article in the *Journal des Débats*, which at that period was entirely under the direction of the cabinet of the Tuileries, openly avowed that the election of the King of Denmark to the Swedish throne would be agreeable to the French Emperor. No sooner was this paper received in Sweden than it produced the greatest consternation. The leading men in that kingdom at once saw that they were about to be sacrificed to the balance of power in Northern Europe, and that, under the pretence of the necessity of providing a counterpart in that quarter to the exorbitant power of Russia, by uniting the three Baltic crowns on one head, they were in effect to be subjected to the rule of their old and inveterate enemies. Colonel Surenaim, a Frenchman by birth, but long aide-de-camp to the present King of Sweden, let fall the expression in the midst of the general disquietude

24.
Napoleon declares in favour of the King of Denmark.

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LXX.

1810.

¹ Montg.
vii. 28, 29.
Bign. ix.
22.

—“The lowest French general would be better received here than the King of Denmark.” Many examples had recently occurred of the elevation of French generals to European thrones ; and the Swedes were too clearsighted not to perceive that possibly, by the election of such an officer, they might, without hazard to their own independence, secure the powerful support of France against the encroachments of Russia.¹

25.
But the
Swedes
elect Bernadotte.

A large party in Sweden, accordingly, turned their eyes to Bernadotte, who commanded the large French army on the shores of the Baltic, and who, as already mentioned, had gained the affections of a great number of the best families in Sweden, from his kindness to a body of Swedish prisoners taken in the Polish war of 1807. A committee of twelve was, according to the form of the Swedish law, appointed to recommend a successor to the Diet ; and at first, eleven votes declared for the young Prince of Augustenburg, and only one for Bernadotte. Before the final day of election a French agent arrived at Oerebro, where the Diet sat, and announced, though, as it was afterwards asserted, without any authority, that the wishes of Napoleon were in favour of the election of his victorious general. In truth the French Emperor did not desire, though he was not opposed to it. This intelligence immediately altered the determination of the committee. At the public election, a few days afterwards, ten of the twelve voted for Bernadotte, and their choice was confirmed by the Swedish Diet. He was soon after adopted as son by Charles XIII. As soon as Napoleon received the intelligence, although he expressed his surprise at it, and wrote to his ambassador at St Petersburg that he would have preferred to see the King of Denmark on the throne, yet he nevertheless advised Bernadotte to accept the dignity of the Crown Prince, and advanced him a million of francs for the expenses immediately consequent upon it.²*

² Napoleon
to the King
of Sweden.
Sept. 6,
1810. Bign.
ix. 222, 228.
Montg. vii.
28, 31.

Sept. 17.

* Although Napoleon immediately disavowed the agent at Oerebro who

Charles John Bernadotte, Prince of Pontecorvo, and ultimately King of Sweden, was born at Pau, in Béarn, in the south of France, on the 6th of January 1764. He was the son of a lawyer, and first embraced the profession of arms by entering as a private in the regiment of royal marines.* In that capacity he served in India during the American war, and was present at the taking of Pondicherry. Upon returning to Europe, when peace was concluded between France and England in 1783, he thought seriously of quitting the service, and embracing the profession of the law in his native town; but he was prevented by the favour of his colonel, who fixed the destinies of the young soldier, by promoting the future marshal of France and King of Sweden to the rank of sergeant. At the breaking out of the Revolution in 1792, he enjoyed the satisfaction, at Marseilles, of rescuing from a ferocious mob the colonel who had promoted him, and saving his life at the hazard of his own. When war commenced in 1792, he distinguished himself in several combats in Flanders, and had attained to the rank of a general of brigade, at the battle of Fleurus, in 1794. He continued to signalise himself in the war on the frontier, particularly at the passage of the Rhine at

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26.

His early
history.

had used his name in this transaction, and although the Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote to the French ambassador at Stockholm, that "he could not bring himself to believe that that individual would have had the impudence to declare himself invested with any diplomatic mission, or authorised to make the least insinuation relative to the election;" yet it is more than probable that that agent was in fact authorised by the French Emperor, who adopted that method of securing the elevation of one of his generals to the throne of a monarchy bordering on Russia, without openly committing himself in his cause. It is extremely improbable that any unauthorised individual would have ventured to interfere in such a transaction, and still more unlikely that the French Minister at Cerebro would have been the dupe of an impostor. The extreme anxiety which Napoleon evinced for some time afterwards to convince the cabinet of St Petersburg that he had taken no concern in this election, only renders it the more probable that he was in reality at the bottom of the transaction.—See HARD. xi. 127, 128; BIGNON, ix. 226, 228.

* When he put on his uniform in this regiment at Pau, he exchanged in a frolic his dress with that of a companion, who at the same moment had entered the regiment. The latter in giving him his uniform, said, "Go, I make you a marshal of France."—ST DONAT, i. 122.

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¹ St Donat.
i. 121, 159.
Montg. vii.
31.

27.

Causes
which
brought
him into
celebrity.
² *Aule*, ch.
xxvii. § 7.

Niederwörth, in the year 1796. In 1797 he was repeatedly noticed in the war with Austria, especially at the passage of the Piave, and in the siege of the fortress of Gradisca. In June 1798, he was appointed ambassador at Vienna, and soon after married the daughter of a merchant at Marscilles, of the name of Clary. In 1799 he refused the command of the army in Italy, and took the command of that on the Upper Rhine, where he soon reduced Mannheim, and, in the end of June in that year, he was appointed minister of war at Paris.¹

To the zeal and ability which he displayed in restoring the shattered ranks of the republican armies, Napoleon was mainly indebted, as already observed, for his astonishing success at Marengo.² But he was dismissed from the office of minister of war by Napoleon, to whom his sturdy republican opinions had proved highly obnoxious, on the occasion of the 18th of Brumaire. Napoleon, however, who was aware of his abilities, afterwards appointed him to the head of the army which invaded Hanover in 1803; in 1804 he was made a marshal of the empire; in 1805 the corps which he commanded had a great share in the successes of Ulm, whither Bernadotte had led it from Hanover; in 1806 he was distinguished in the campaign of Jena, and effected the destruction of Blücher's corps at Lübeck; and, after the peace of Tilsit, he received from Napoleon the military command of the Hanse Towns. He was immediately afterwards intrusted with the formation of a Saxon corps at Dresden, which took part in the battle of Wagram, and the address to whom, from their commander, as already shown, excited in a peculiar manner the indignation of the French Emperor.³ After this he fell into disgrace, and it was without the knowledge of Napoleon that he was sent by the minister of war from Paris to arrest the progress of the English on the banks of the Scheldt, after the taking of Flushing.⁴ Napoleon, after he learned the election of his old lieutenant to the rank of Crown Prince of Sweden,

³ *Aule*, ch.
lix. § 60.
⁴ St Donat,
i. 121, 159.
Hard. xi.
127. Montg.
vii. 31. Biog.
Univ. Sup.
lvii. (Ber-
nadotte.)

had an interview with him, at which, though warmly solicited, he refused to absolve him from his oath of allegiance to France. Bernadotte, however, was firm ; and, after some altercation, Napoleon yielded, and dismissed him with these words : " Well—be it so : set off. Let our destinies be accomplished."

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It need hardly be said that he must have been a most remarkable man who thus raised himself from the rank of a private soldier to that of marshal of France and king of Sweden ; and still more, who, after the fall of Napoleon and the general overthrow of the Revolutionary authorities in Europe, could succeed in maintaining his place upon the throne, amidst the fall of all the other potentates who had owed their elevation to the Emperor's triumphs. In truth, Bernadotte was unquestionably one of the ablest men of the age, fruitful as it was in the greatest ability and the most heroic characters. He was gifted by nature, not merely with the most intrepid courage, but with an uncommon degree of calmness in danger, which early attracted the notice of his comrades, and was the principal cause of his rapid elevation in the Revolutionary armies. Difficulties never found him unprepared, dangers always found him undaunted. He belonged in early life to the extreme republican party, and was so closely allied with many of the worst characters in the Revolution, that he narrowly escaped destruction on occasion of the revolution in 1799, which elevated Napoleon to the throne. But, fortunately for Bernadotte, his duties in the army kept him, in general, far removed from the atrocities of the Revolution ; and his democratic principles, however strong, were not so deeply rooted but that they readily gave place to the suggestions of individual elevation. He was ambitious, and, like most of the other marshals, little scrupulous in the means which he adopted to increase his fortune ; but though rapacious when accident or success gave him the means of plunder, he had nothing cruel or vindictive in his disposition ; and he was

28.
His character as a general.

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mainly indebted for his elevation to the throne of Charles XII. to the kindness which he showed to the Swedish prisoners in the war of 1807.

29.
His conduct
as a king.

After his destiny was fixed, he attached himself in good earnest to the interests of Sweden. The unbearable arrogance of Napoleon combined with the influence of the monarchy to which he had been elected to make him espouse the cause of Russia in the great struggle which ensued in 1812 between France and that power. And although afterwards, when the fortunes of Napoleon appeared on the wane, he evinced a natural repugnance to push his old general to extremities, and was only held to his engagements by the strenuous efforts of the British envoy at his headquarters, Lord Londonderry, yet equity must perhaps rather approve than condemn a feeling which, when the interests of his adopted country were secured, led him to incline to that of his birth. He was gifted with remarkable conversational talents, and shared in all the disposition to vanity and gasconade which belongs to the province of his birth; but he was endowed with great penetration and solidity of judgment. His wise administration has gone far to reconcile the Norwegians to the hated government of Sweden; and although a powerful party in the latter kingdom secretly indulge the hope of the restoration of the legitimate successor to the throne, he has done as much to transmit the crown to his posterity as can possibly be the case with a dynasty resting on a violent, even though a necessary revolution.

30.
Continued
encroach-
ments by
Napoleon in
Central and
Northern
Europe.

July 7,
1810.

While these important events were occurring in the north of Europe, and determining in their ultimate effects the fate of the Scandinavian peninsula, Napoleon was pursuing, with now undisguised avidity, his career of pacific aggrandisement in the central parts of Europe. It has been already mentioned that Louis Buonaparte, unable to endure the indignities to which he was subjected by the tyrannical disposition of his imperial brother, had in July 1810 resigned the throne of Holland, which

was immediately incorporated by Napoleon with the French empire. The reasons assigned for this stretch were these:—"To leave in foreign hands the mouths of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, would be to render the industry of France tributary to the power holding possession of these mouths. Their union to France, on the contrary, completes the empire of France, and the system of its Emperor. It is a step essential to the restoration of its marine, and the most sensible blow which can be given to the power of England." It was not this usurpation, however, great and flagrant as it was, which was the original circumstance that occasioned a coldness between the Emperors of France and Russia. The first seeds of a serious outbreak between Napoleon and the Emperor Alexander arose from the irritation produced in the breast of the latter by the preference given by Napoleon to the Archduchess Maria Louisa over the Grand-duchess Paulowna,¹ with whom he was also in treaty for marriage. These aggressions and causes of irritation were soon afterwards followed by others of a still more serious complexion. On the 12th of November the republic of the Valais, commanding the important passage of the Simplon into Italy, was incorporated with the French empire, upon the ground that this incorporation was a necessary issue of the immense works which the Emperor had, for ten years, carried on in that part of the Alps.²*

¹ *Ante*, ch. lxiii. § 9.

Nov. 12.
² Decree,
Dec. 13,
1810, *Moniteur*. Bign.
ix. 335, 198.

The same *senatus consultum* announced to the world other strides in the north of Germany of a still more serious and alarming character. The preamble to this part of the decree was:—"The British Orders in Council,

* The preamble of the *senatus-consultum* bore—"The union of the Valais to France is a consequence, long foreseen, of the immense works which I have been executing for ten years past, in that part of the Alps. When, by my act of mediation, I separated the Valais from the Helvetic Confederacy, I did so from foreseeing that one day or other this union, so useful to France and Italy, could no longer be delayed. It has now become indispensable, from the distracted state of the canton, and the abuse which one part of the people has made of its sovereignty over another."—BIGNON, ix. 335, 336.

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1810.

31.

Annexation
of the Hanse-
towns and
the Duchy
of Olden-
burg to the
French em-
pire.
Dec. 13,
1810.

and the Berlin and the Milan Decrees for 1806 and 1807, have torn to shreds the public law of Europe. A new order of things reigns throughout the world. New guarantees having become necessary, I have considered the union of the mouths of the Scheldt, the Meuse, and the Rhine, of the Ems, the Weser, and the Elbe, to the French empire, and the establishment of an interior line of communication with the Baltic Sea, to be of the utmost importance. I have accordingly caused a plan to be prepared, which will be completed in five years, that will unite the Baltic with the Seine. Indemnity shall be given to the princes who may be injured by this great measure, which necessity commands, and which makes the right of my empire rest on the Baltic Sea." This immense measure of spoliation, which extended the limits of the French empire almost to the frontiers of Russia, involved alike the possessions of the members of Napoleon's own family, and of the relations of those independent powers which it was most his interest to have conciliated. Five hundred thousand souls were by it swept off from the dominions of the king of Westphalia, his own brother, and two hundred thousand from the territory of the grand-duchy of Berg, which he had bestowed upon Murat. But—what was much more serious—it swallowed up the whole possessions of the Grand-duke of Oldenburg, the brother-in-law of the Emperor Alexander, and, besides entirely cutting off Prussia from the coast of the German Ocean, brought the French empire up to Lübeck, almost within sight of the Russian frontier. So little, however, was Napoleon disquieted by the consequences of this spoliation of the Grand-duke of Oldenburg, notwithstanding his relationship to the Emperor Alexander, that he wrote:—"As to the Grand-duke, I shall leave him his private property till a treaty has been concluded; but his public territories must be instantly taken from him.² Not only can that prince no longer be permitted to preserve his territories, but he cannot be per-

² Decree,
Dec. 13,
1810. Moni-
teur. Bign.
ix. 354, 359.
Hard. xi.
209, 210.
Marten's
Sup. i. 346.
Bign. x. 4,
5. Napoleon
to Duc de
Calore, 5th
Jan. 1811.

mitted the enjoyment of his patrimonial effects but for a time. His country must be governed by French laws. All seignorial rights are suppressed. Before six months are over, the country must have changed its face. I will give the Grand-duke Erfurth."

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This monstrous encroachment of Napoleon—serious as it was from the immense extent of the territory thereby incorporated with the French empire, which extended its dominion from eighty-four to one hundred and thirty departments, and its population from thirty-six to forty-two millions of souls—excited the most violent feelings at St Petersburg, and blew into a flame those feelings of irritation which had existed in the Emperor's breast ever since the slight thrown upon his sister by the marriage of Napoleon. The invasion, great as it was, was rendered still more alarming from the manner in which it was carried into effect; for here an immense tract in the north of Germany was at once annexed to the French empire, without either the formality of diplomatic sanction, or the right acquired by actual conquest. No monarch since the days of Charlemagne had arrogated to himself a similar right of disposing of independent states by a simple stroke of the pen. The French Emperor took upon himself the right to dispose of free cities and independent potentates in the north of Germany, as an eastern sultaun would of the fortunes of his dependent pashas. With truth might be applied to him, what the Prince of Orange, on occasion of much less spoliation, said of Louis XIV.,—"One must be blind not to see that the King of France aspires to the universal dominion of Europe. Better to perish at once, with arms in our hands, than to allow him to continue similar usurpations." Alexander, accordingly, from the moment that he heard of this spoliation, determined to put himself on the defensive. "We must," said he, "be prepared for everything, and protest against that act. Had the Emperor Napoleon, instead of this violent act, come to my frontiers, he would

32.
Jealousy of
Russia at
these en-
croach-
ments.

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have found me as much estranged from England as I was three years ago. He would have found decisive proof that the devotion of Russia to the cause of the Continent, is the result of a desire for peace, and not a sense of weakness." From that moment the intimacy of Alexander with Caulaincourt at St Petersburg ceased, and was succeeded by coldness and reserve. But however great and unprecedented the stretch might be, it was obvious that Napoleon was prepared to make it good by the sword, and that it would be wrenched from him only by force of arms: for shortly before he had, without any apparent reverse to justify the measure, issued a decree, ordering the levy of forty-five thousand men for the service of the navy, and one hundred and twenty-five thousand men for that of the army, taken from the youth who should arrive at the age of nineteen in the years 1810 and 1811.¹

Sept. 27,
1810.

¹ Marten's
Sup. v. 347.
Moniteur,
Sept. 27,
1810. Bign.
ix. 361, 365.
Montg. vii.
39, 40. Bign.
x. 7.

33.
Apprehen-
sions of
Russia of
the restora-
tion of the
kingdom of
Poland.

But in addition to this great and well-founded cause of complaint, Russia had other sources of disquietude, which were not so strongly established in sound reason, but arose rather from the apprehension that her ill-gotten gains would be wrested from her. The grand-duchy of Warsaw was a continual object of jealousy to the cabinet of St Petersburg; and although Napoleon, as already mentioned, had done his utmost to remove their uneasiness on this head, and expressed his desire "that the name of Poland should disappear, not only from the political transactions of Europe, but even from the page of history;"* yet he had by no means succeeded in allaying their apprehensions. The Russian ministers saw very little of this disposition in the large augmentation which he had given to this duchy out of the spoils of the Austrian monarchy, after the treaty of Vienna in 1809; and so anxious did the Emperor Alexander become on this subject, shortly after the conclusion of the Austrian treaty, that he opened a negotiation with Napoleon,² with

² Bign. ix.
101.

* *Ante*, Chap. LX. § 42. CHAMPAGNY to ALEXANDER, 20th Oct. 1809.

a view to the conclusion of a convention which should for ever allay all the fears which he felt on the subject.

A convention, accordingly, was drawn up, which Champagny expressly authorised Caulaincourt, the French ambassador at St Petersburg, to sign, which was done accordingly, early in 1810, whereby it was expressly stipulated "that the kingdom of Poland shall *never be re-established*. The high contracting parties mutually agree, that the name of Poland and Poles shall never in future be applied to any of the districts, or inhabitants, who formerly composed the kingdom of Poland, and that that name shall *be effaced for ever from every public and official act*; the Polish orders of chivalry shall be abolished; and the grand-duchy of Warsaw shall never be extended over any farther portion of what formerly constituted the ancient kingdom of Poland." The Emperor of Russia testified the most extreme satisfaction at the conclusion of this convention, and professed his delight at again feeling himself at liberty to give free vent to his admiration of so great a man as Napoleon, and his anxious hope that his "family might occupy the French throne for ever."¹

Had this convention, as signed by his ambassador, been ratified by Napoleon, his destiny might possibly have been different, and his family, according to Alexander's wish, have been still on the throne of France. But the convention arrived in Paris at a critical time; when Napoleon, as already mentioned, had taken umbrage at the impediments thrown in the way of the proposals he had made for the Grand-duchess Paulowna, and when he was already in secret treaty for the Austrian Arch-duchess.² He declined, therefore, to ratify the convention; proposing, in lieu of the first article of it, regarding the kingdom of Poland never being re-established, to insert one "binding himself to give no encouragement to any attempt tending to its re-establishment." The Emperor of Russia, piqued at this declinature, the more

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34.
Napoleon's efforts to remove all Alexander's fears on that head.
Jan. 4, 1810.

¹ Bign. ix. 101, 103.

35.
Napoleon refuses to ratify Champagny's convention.

² Ante, ch. lxiii. § 9.

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LXX.

1810.

May 11,
1810.
1 Bign. ix.
90, 111.
Duke de
Vicenza to
Caulain-
court,
March 11,
1810.

so as it occurred at the very time of the slight thrown on his sister, insisted warmly with Caulaincourt for a simple adhesion to the original convention, as it stood signed by the ambassador of France. But he never could achieve this object; and the effect of this secession of Napoleon from what his ambassador had agreed to, was very great. It was never forgotten by Alexander, who was scrupulously observant of personal honour in such transactions. Already it had become apparent that the alliance of France and Russia was shaken. In a private conversation with Caulaincourt, Alexander said:—"If affairs change, it is not my fault: I shall not be the first to disturb the peace of Europe: I will attack no one: but, if they come to seek me, I shall defend myself."¹

36.
Progress of
the angry
negotiations
on the sub-
ject.

Napoleon, however, never could be brought to agree to a convention stipulating that the kingdom of Poland should not be restored, and he answered the Russian ministers in very warm terms when pressed on the subject. The cabinet of St Petersburg, therefore, became apprehensive that an attack on their Polish possessions was meditated by Napoleon. So serious had their fears become, that a great augmentation of their force in Poland had already taken place, extensive intrenchments had been erected at Drissa on the Dwina, capable of containing a large army; and a new levy had been ordered throughout the vast dominions of the Czar. These defensive measures in their turn excited the jealousy of Napoleon, who with reason saw no sufficient explanation of them in the pretext alleged of the losses of the Turkish war; and he directed his ambassador at the court of St Petersburg to demand explanations on the subject.* Alexander, on being pressed to give his reasons for these fieldworks, retorted by referring to the continued march of

* "It is vain to dissemble, that these fieldworks of such extent indicate bad dispositions on the part of the Russian cabinet. After having concluded peace with the Porte, as they have soon the prospect of doing, are they about to come to an understanding with the English and violate the treaty of Tilsit? Such a measure would at once place them in a state of hostility with France.

French troops, and a large park of artillery, into the north of Germany; observed that he took no umbrage at similar defensive works at Modlin, Thorn, Warsaw, and Torgau; that the demands now made by Napoleon for a rigorous execution of the Continental System were unauthorised by any agreement; and that the only favour which he had yet asked of him not contained in the treaties, viz. a convention concerning Poland, had been refused.¹

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¹ Caulaincourt to Napoleon, December 7, 1810. Bign. ix. 368, 369.

The spoliation of the Grand-duke of Oldenburg, however, brought matters to a crisis between the two Emperors. Alexander was no sooner informed of that violent act, and the extension of the French empire to the shores of the Baltic, than he replied in a manner which affected Napoleon in the most sensitive point. On the 31st December 1810, he published an imperial ukase, which, under the colour of regulating the affairs of commerce, in effect contained a material relaxation of the rigour of the decrees hitherto in force in the Russian empire against English commerce. Colonial produce was admitted if under a neutral flag: a thin disguise, under which the commercial enterprise of England was soon able to veil the most extensive mercantile speculations. Many articles of French manufacture were virtually prohibited, by not being included in the list of goods which might be admitted on payment of a duty—particularly laces, bronzes, jewellery, silks, ribbons, and gauzes. These regulations were attended by an order for the establishment of a coast-guard of eighty thousand men to enforce obedience to them: a step which it might be easily seen was but a cloak for the augmentation of the regular army. In addition to this, the cabinet of St Petersburg presented a diplomatic note to all the courts in Europe,

37.
Russian commercial ukase in the end of 1810. Dec. 31, 1810.

I do not desire war; but I will be always ready to undertake it; and such is the posture of affairs that, to continue at peace, the Continent must make war on England as long as England makes war on France."—NAPOLEON to DUC DE CADORE, (Champagny,) 5th Dec. 1810—BIGNON, ix. 368.

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1810.

¹ Marten's
Sup. i. 348.
Bign. ix.
370, 371;
x. 23. Na-
poleon to
Duc de
Cadore.
5th March
1811.

38.
Napoleon
takes back
the kingdom
of Hanover
from
Jerome.
July 14,
1810.

formally complaining of the annexation of the duchy of Oldenburg to the French empire. Napoleon was strongly excited by this disobedience of his mandates; but as he was not yet prepared for war, he judged it expedient to represent it at present only as a ground of preparation. "I shall not," said he, "go to war on account of the ukase and the tariff; but I shall stand on the defensive against the bad disposition which dictated it. I said myself to Chernicheff that since I was made acquainted with that act, I have raised a conscription; that act will cost me a hundred millions (£4,000,000) this year.¹

The imperious disposition of Napoleon strongly appeared in the course of the year 1810, in the transactions with his brother, the new King of Westphalia. He had, by a solemn deed, made over to that monarch all the rights which he possessed by conquest over the electorate of Hanover; under the burden, according to his usual practice, of a large portion of the revenues of the electorate, which he reserved to himself, as a fund from which to reward his favourite generals or officers, and on the condition also of throwing upon those of the King of Westphalia the entire expense of supporting the French troops who might ever be stationed in his territory. The payment of these French troops, however, did not proceed with great regularity; and Napoleon made this a pretext for declaring to his brother Jerome, "that he found himself, with regret, under the necessity of resuming the administration of Hanover; that he regarded the treaty as annulled by the King of Westphalia himself; and that he felt himself at entire liberty to dispose of the Hanoverian territory as his interests might dictate." In effect, it was shortly after incorporated with France, under the name of the 32d military division, on occasion of the union of the Hanse Towns to the "Grande Nation." Entirely regardless of his own deeds of violence, Napoleon addressed the most vehement reproaches to Alexander for the ukase of 30th December. "The

last ukase of your Majesty," said he, is "evidently and specially directed against France. All Europe regards it in that light. Already our alliance, in the opinions of the Continent and England, no longer exists. Consider what benefit your Majesty has derived from that alliance; you have annexed Wallachia and Moldavia, that is, a third of Turkey, to your dominions; you have gained Finland, which has caused Sweden to cease to exist, for Stockholm is at the outposts of that kingdom. As a return to me, your Majesty excludes my commerce from the Gulf of Bothnia to the Danube."¹

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1811.

¹ Bign. ix.
236, 238;
x. 13, 17.
Napoleon to
Alexander,
28th Feb.
1811.

The clouds, however, which, from so many concurrent causes, were seen to be threatening the French empire in the north of Europe, were in the estimation of the Emperor more than compensated by the fortunate event which occurred at Paris in March. The Empress Maria Louisa, who had long promised an heir to the throne, on the 20th was seized with the pains of childbirth; but though she had the aid of the most skilful medical assistance which France could afford, she suffered long and dreadfully before the delivery took place. The calm resolution of Napoleon was signally evinced on this occasion, so interesting to his feelings, and so vital to the stability of his throne. The sufferings of the Empress were so protracted and severe, that the medical attendants declared to him, that either she or the infant must perish before the delivery could be effected, and they insinuated a question which should be sacrificed. Napoleon, without hesitating an instant, replied, "Act as you would towards the wife of a burgher in the Rue St Denis: if possible, save both; but, at all events, preserve the Empress." This bold but feeling advice was attended with a happier result than was anticipated: the infant was saved, and proved a son; and at six in the morning, the cannon of the Invalides announced to the capital that the much-wished-for event had taken place, and that the KING OF ROME was born.²

30.
Birth of the
King of
Rome, and
resolution
shown by
the Empe-
ror on this
occasion,
March 20,
1811.

² Las Cases,
iv. 32, 34.
Thib. viii.
341.

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40.

Enthusiastic
joy in Paris
on the occa-
sion.

It had been previously intimated, that if the infant were a princess, twenty-one guns only would be fired ; but if a prince, a hundred. At the first report, the whole inhabitants of Paris awakened, and the discharges were counted with intense interest, till, when the twenty-first gun had gone off, the anxiety of all classes had risen to an unbearable pitch. The gunners delayed an instant before the next piece was discharged, and some hundred thousand persons held their breath : but when the twenty-second, double-charged, was let off, the whole inhabitants of all ages and sexes sprang on their feet, and universal joy testified the profound hold which the Emperor had acquired of the affections of the people. Innumerable addresses were presented by the public bodies from all parts of France, in which the whole flowers of European rhetoric and Eastern adulation were exhausted, to express the universal enthusiasm at this auspicious event.^{1*}

¹ Thib. viii.
341, 342.
Montg. viii.
45, 49.

41.
Tyrannical
conduct of
Napoleon
towards
Prussia.

The secession, now hardly disguised, of Russia from the severity of the Continental System, had the effect only of rendering Napoleon more urgent in exacting the most strict and rigorous execution of his decrees from the other powers in the north of Europe. From Denmark he met with the most willing compliance, and a disposition even to anticipate his wishes in the war against the hated commerce of England ; for the cabinet of Copenhagen shut her ports absolutely to all neutral vessels whatever bearing colonial produce, and declared all vessels bearing them subject to confiscation : a measure which effectually prevented the possibility of subterfuge. Against Prussia he fulminated menacing complaints for her alleged connivance at a contraband traffic ; and with such effect that the cabinet of Berlin was compelled to sign a treaty on 28th January 1811, by which it was stipulated that the

* The joyful intelligence was communicated from Paris to a chateau on the lake of Nemi, beyond Rome, by means of a balloon, in sixteen hours.—BIGNON, x. 224.

Prussian confiscations of British goods should be accounted for to France, but be taken as a deduction from the amount of the Prussian debt still unpaid from the war contributions. But while the Emperor was thus rigorous in exacting the most implicit obedience to his decrees from others, he was daily enriching himself by the sale of licenses which authorised a contraband trade in direct opposition to them. He thus justified this extraordinary self-abandonment of his own system:—"I will gain," said he, "a considerable tax on licenses, for the exportation of my merchandise and the provisioning of my marine. That vast system tends to aliment my harbours, to rear up a commerce founded on exemptions, in the midst of the general blockade, and to procure for me a considerable revenue. I thus, by a continental imposition, reply to the injustice of the English on the sea. I render injustice for injustice, arbitrary measures for arbitrary. Thereafter I am not submitting to an unjust system, but resenting it."¹

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¹ Marten's
Sup. i. 398.
Bign. ix.
325, 326,
335.

Towards the court of Sweden he assumed a still more threatening tone. He loudly complained that, under pretence of a traffic in salt, a contraband trade was still carried on in the Swedish ports in British colonial produce; and declared that he would greatly prefer open war with himself to such a state of covert communication with his enemies. "I begin to see," said he, "that I have committed a fault in consenting to the restoration of Pomerania to Sweden. Let the Swedes know that my troops shall instantly re-enter that province, if the treaty is not carried into execution to the very letter."² Nor was his language softened by the arrival of the new Crown Prince Bernadotte at Stockholm, and the consequent direction by him of the principal affairs of government. On the contrary, he only expected and demanded a more complete submission to his will from his former lieutenant than from an independent power. "Choose," said he, "between cannon-shot against the English vessels which approach your coasts, and the confiscation of their mer-

42.
And to Swe-
den in re-
gard to the
Continen-
tal System.

² Napoleon
to Charles
XIII. May
23, 1810.

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1810.

chandise, or an immediate war with France. Sweden is now doing me more mischief than the whole five coalitions put together. You tell me Sweden is suffering. Bah! Is not France suffering? Are not Bordeaux, Holland, Germany, suffering? We must all suffer to conquer a maritime peace. Sweden is the sole cause of the crisis I now experience; it must be ended: at all hazards we must conquer a maritime peace." But experience ere long convinced the Emperor that these measures, how rigorous soever, were inadequate to prevent the contraband trade, especially as by the system of licenses he did so much to encourage it. He deemed it better, therefore, to change his system, and, instead of prohibition, render the introduction of English goods a source of profit. By a decree dated Trianon, 5th August 1810, the importation of English goods was permitted on paying a duty which exceeded fifty per cent on their value. This was soon after followed by another, which declared that the merchandise seized should be burned, not sold for behoof of the imperial exchequer; and by a third, published on the same day, the English goods in Holstein were permitted to pass the frontier at Hamburg on paying the duties imposed by the decree of 5th August.¹

5th Oct.
1810.

¹ Napoleon
to Charles
XIII. Oct.
26, 1810.
Bign. ix.
337, 341.
Hard. xi.
129, 130.
Bign. ix.
330, 336.

43.
Universal
misery pro-
duced by
the Conti-
nental Sys-
tem.

Napoleon had good reason for saying that France and her dependencies were suffering at this terrible crisis, and modifying, in these important particulars, the rigour of the Continental System. Such was the exhaustion and stoppage of industry in the principal towns of the empire, that the paupers amounted in many places to a third, in some to two-thirds, of the whole population.* In Russia, the system of paper credit was entirely ruined by the effects of the Continental System; and government paper had fallen so low, that the paper ruble in the loan negotiated with Pichler, on 27th March 1810, was esti-

* At Rome in 1810 out of 147,000 souls were paupers 30,000

— Amsterdam of	217,000	„	80,000
— Venice,	100,000	„	70,000

mated at just one-half of the silver ruble ; and, taking this depreciation into view, the interest stipulated by the lenders in reality amounted to twenty-eight per cent. In Austria, official announcement had been made that the government paper had fallen to a fifth of its nominal value. But, bad as this was, the financial and individual ruin in Prussia was incomparably greater. Industry was everywhere at a stand from the want of external commerce, and the absorption of all domestic funds in the French requisitions ; the exchequer was penniless, and the national credit extinct ; a strong feeling of necessity and patriotic duty alone induced the few remaining capitalists to come forward to enable the King to meet the rigorous demands of Napoleon's tax-gatherers. The augmentation of the troops in her territory in the course of 1810 and 1811, all of whom were fed, clothed, paid, and lodged at the expense of the bleeding state, was such as to exceed belief, if it were not attested by contemporary and authentic documents.* Nothing, however, could soften the French Emperor ; on that subject, the payment of money, he was generally inexorable. " I shall not," said he, " give up a single fortress in Prussia till of 86,000,000 francs, still owing to me, I have received 50,000,000," (£2,000,000.) It was not without extreme difficulty that such prodigious sums could, by the united efforts of the French and Prussian authorities, be extracted from the people ; but here, too, the enormous power and irresistible forces of France had provided the means of extortion. The great fortress of Magdeburg had been converted into a prison for the defaulters in the state contributions from all the surrounding provinces ; and

* In a secret report by Chancellor Hardenberg to Baron Krusmark, by order of the King, on 30th August 1811, it was stated, " The Saxon army was cantoned within two days' march of the King's palace ; Dantzic alone contains an army, in lieu of the ten thousand men as stipulated by the treaties ; France has augmented the troops on the Oder to twenty-three thousand men, and their support alone costs the state two hundred and fifty thousand francs a-month. The garrison of Stettin has been augmented to seventeen thousand five hundred men."—*Report, BARON HARDENBERG, 30th August 1811 ; HARDENBERG, xi. 251.*

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into that huge bastille, Davoust, at the head of an army of seventy thousand men, incessantly poured new shoals of victims. Yet in spite of all their efforts, the demands of France could not be satisfied; and the books of Daru, the inspector-general of accounts, exhibited a continual and hopeless array of arrears undischarged, and debt accumulating. The condition of the kingdom of Westphalia, though held by a brother of Napoleon, was equally deplorable: the burden of feeding, paying, and clothing the numerous bodies of armed men quartered on their territory had become so excessive, that the Westphalian government were unable to comply with it, without taxing the domain reserved to the French Emperor, which it had been stipulated should be free of all burdens for ten years: and this so irritated Napoleon, that he wrote, as already noticed, with his own hand, to Jerome, that "he considered all former treaties between them annulled, and himself at liberty to dispose of Hanover as the policy of France might seem to dictate. At the same time, he formally intimated to the Duke of Mecklenberg, that he would forthwith incorporate his dominions with France, if he did not instantly carry the Continental System into entire execution in his dominions.¹*

¹ Hard. xi.
239, 249,
251. Schoell,
x. 99, 100.
Bign. ix.
180, 238;
x. 110.

44.
Treaties
between
France and
Prussia.

It may readily be conceived that, in these circumstances, Prussia would willingly have thrown off her fetters, if she could have done so with the slightest prospect of success. But such was the prostration and exhaustion of the country, and the universal terror excited by the arms of Napoleon, that the boldest heads and warmest hearts in that country could see no other mode of prolonging the national existence, and averting the immediate stroke of fate, but by a close alliance with, and unqualified submission to, his government. The Emperor Alexander had, on 30th June 1811, secretly announced to the King of Prussia his resolution to defend himself if attacked;

* NAPOLEON *au* DUC DE CADORE, 25th March 1811; BIGNON, x. 131.

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1812.

Feb. 24,
1812.

but the cabinet of Berlin had not sufficient confidence in the strength or firmness of Russia to second the bold design. Terror of France had mastered every heart. Under the influence of these feelings, and overawed on the one hand by the violent seizure of Swedish Pomerania, which Marshal Davoust entered in February 1812, and immediately overran at the head of twenty thousand men, and on the other by the dread of the resumption of Silesia by its old owner Austria, now in close alliance with France, the cabinet of Berlin not only acceded to, but invited, the conclusion of a treaty of the closest kind with France. It was entered into, accordingly, and stipulated that there should be an alliance offensive and defensive between the two monarchs: that they should mutually guarantee the integrity of each other's territories; and that the Continental System should be enforced with the utmost rigour in all the Prussian harbours. It was provided, however, in secret articles, that the contingent of Prussia, which was fixed at twenty thousand men and sixty guns, besides twenty thousand men in garrison, "should not be exigible on account of any wars in which the Emperor might engage beyond the Pyrenees, in Italy, or *Turkey*." In addition to this, the most minute stipulations were inserted, in separate conventions, concerning the march of troops through the Prussian territories, the supplies which were to be furnished to them, and the co-operation of Prussia in the projected war with Russia. The effects of this treaty soon appeared in the entrance of a hundred and eighty thousand infantry, and seventy thousand cavalry, which spread like a deluge through the Prussian territory, occupied all its fortresses, and devoured, like a cloud of locusts, the whole remaining resources of the country; while the Prussian contingent of twenty thousand men was, in a manner, drowned in the prodigious multitude by which it was surrounded. Shortly after, the French general, Durutte, was appointed governor of Berlin;¹ and a royal edict prohibited the introduction of

¹ See treaty in Marten's Sup. i. 414, and secret articles, in Hard. xi. 325, 326, and Schoell, x. 116, 120. Bign. x. 142.

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LXX.

1812.

45.

And with
Austria.

colonial produce, on any pretence, from the Russian into the Prussian territory.

This treaty was immediately followed by another between France and the cabinet of Vienna; which not only relieved Napoleon of all anxiety regarding the latter power, but put a considerable part of her resources at his command. Austria, since the peace of Vienna, had been treated in a very different manner from the dominions of Frederick William, or the lesser German states: her territory was respected, her fortresses were garrisoned by her own troops, and the arrears of contributions collected and remitted by her own authorities. The same difference appeared in the treaty which was concluded between the cabinet of Vienna and that of the Tuileries. Austria was to furnish an auxiliary force of thirty thousand men and sixty pieces of cannon; the integrity of the dominions of the Sublime Porte was secured against Russia; the two powers mutually guaranteed each other's dominions, and concluded an alliance offensive and defensive. By another secret treaty, which was attended with most important effects in the sequel, it was provided that the *casus fœderis* should not apply to the war beyond the Pyrenees, but expressly to one with Russia; that the province of Galicia should be guaranteed to Austria, even in the event of the kingdom of Poland being restored; that part of Galicia specified in the treaty might in that event be exchanged for the Illyrian provinces; and that due compensation, in the shape of an adequate aggrandisement of territory, should be provided for Austria in the event of a prosperous issue of the war. Turkey was to be invited to accede to the confederacy; and Prince Schwartzemberg, still ambassador at Paris, was appointed to the command of the army.¹

¹ See treaty in Marten's Sup. i. 427, and in Schoell, x. 123, 124. Bign. x. 401, 402.

Nothing can paint Napoleon's astute policy better than these treaties. While, in the secret treaty with Prussia, he expressly provides for the case of a French war with *Turkey*, which he clearly contemplated, and which was

declared not to be within the *casus fœderis*—by the secret treaty with Austria, at the very same time, he disarmed the fears of the latter power on the Ottoman question, by expressly guaranteeing the *integrity of the Ottoman dominions*, and inviting that power to accede to the general league against Russia. And while in his negotiations with Russia relative to the much-desired convention regarding Poland, he again and again expressed his readiness to sign an engagement “*not to favour* any design tending to the re-establishment of the kingdom of Poland,” he at the same time, in the secret treaty with Austria, provided for that very restoration, and stipulated the indemnity which she was to receive in the Illyrian provinces for any *Polish* cessions she might be required to make for its completion.

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LXX.

1810.

46.

Perfidious
policy of
Napoleon
in these
treaties.

While Napoleon was thus fortifying himself, by the accession of Austria and Prussia, for the great and decisive struggle which was approaching, England and Russia, on their part, were not idle; and an ally was gained for the cause of European independence in a quarter where it could least have been anticipated, but whose co-operation proved, in the end, of decisive importance in the subsequent contest. Sweden, farther removed from the scene of danger, and more deeply interested than either Prussia or Austria in the preservation of foreign commerce, from the sterility of its territory, was not so immediately under the control of Napoleon; and both Charles XIII. and Bernadotte justly apprehended the overthrow of their infant dynasty, if they acceded, in all their rigour, to the imperious demands of the French Emperor for war with England, and the exclusion of British manufactures from the Swedish harbours. M. Alquier, the French ambassador at Stockholm, never ceased to urge, in the most menacing manner, in the latter months of 1810, the necessity of an immediate choice of either a war with France, which would be followed by the conquest of Pomerania, or the instantaneous commence-

47.

War forced
on Sweden
against
England.

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ment of hostilities with England. "Sweden," said Napoleon, "does me more mischief than the whole five coalitions put together. The crisis we experience is entirely owing to Sweden. Choose between cannon-shot against the English vessels which approach your coasts, and a war with France." To these demands Bernadotte answered, that a war with England would almost entirely destroy the Swedish revenue ; that the Estates of the kingdom would not submit to any direct imposition ; that the arsenals, in consequence of the disastrous issue of the late war with Russia, were empty ; that salt, an article of primary necessity to Sweden, could only be obtained from England ; that the fleet at Carlscrona could not possibly be got to sea without a great expenditure ; and that, so far from having the funds requisite for that purpose, the government had not even wherewithal to put the fortifications of that harbour in a state of defence against the English fleet.¹

¹Bernadotte to Napoleon, Nov. 19, and Dec. 8, 1810. Schoell, x. 94, 96. Hard. xi. 128, 134. Bign. ix. 341.

^{48.}
Napoleon's
laconic
reply.

Napoleon's reply to these representations was in his usual laconic and imperious style. "You tell me that you wish to remain at peace with France, but I say, let me have proofs of this disposition. Foreign commerce is the present *cheval de bataille* of all nations. I can immediately cause you to be attacked by the Danes and Russians ; and I will instantly do so if in fifteen days you are not at war with England. I have been long enough the dupe of Sweden as well as of Prussia ; but the latter power has at last learned, by the catastrophe of Holland, that it was necessary to take a decided line. I cannot reckon always on the alliance of Russia. I loved the King of Holland, but nevertheless I confiscated his dominions, because he would not obey my will. I did the same with the Swiss. They hesitated to confiscate the English goods : I marched my troops into their dominions, and they soon obeyed. On the fifteenth day from this, war must be declared, or my ambassador has orders to demand his passports. Open war, or a sincere alliance.² These

² Napoleon to Bernadotte, Nov. 11, 1810. Hard. xi. 130. Schoell, x. 94, 96.

are my last words." Napoleon remained perfectly deaf to all the representations made against this peremptory mandate : and as he left them no alternative, war was declared by Sweden against England in the middle of November 1810.

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The Swedish government, however, soon found that their condition was by no means ameliorated by their declaring war against England, so far as France was concerned ; and they had ample opportunity of contrasting the manner in which they were treated by the English, against whom they had declared, and France, for whose alliance they had made such ruinous sacrifices. Feigning to be ignorant of the Swedish declaration of war, the British cruisers committed no hostilities on the Swedish merchantmen ; but, on the other hand, the French captured them without mercy, under pretence that they were trading with England, and were not furnished with French licenses, confiscated the cargoes, and threw the seamen into prison. Meanwhile Napoleon demanded two thousand sailors from Sweden ; and as they were not immediately furnished, he insisted upon its government sending twelve thousand. Bernadotte answered, that Sweden had iron in its harbours to the value of a million sterling ; and that, if Napoleon would take that instead of the seamen, it would be some relief to Swedish industry ; but the Emperor declined this, alleging that he had plenty of iron without going to Sweden for it. He next insisted that French customhouse officers should be established at Goteborg, and that Sweden should accede to a northern confederacy like that of the Rhine, of which he himself was to be the head, and which was to consist of Sweden, Denmark, and the grand-duchy of Warsaw. But the Swedish monarch, aware of the change which had taken place in the close of 1810 in the policy of the Russian cabinet, and feeling his dependence upon Russia and England, both for his resources and his existence, declined the proposal. In truth he had good reason for doing so ; for the com-

49.
Alienation
of Sweden
in conse-
quence of
the over-
bearing de-
mands of
Napoleon.

Dec. 26,
1810.

Dec. 31.

June 9,
1811.

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Jan. 27,
1812.

¹ Schoell,
ix. 96, 101.
Hard. xi,
131, 135.
Bign. ix.
340.

50.
The Swedish
government
allies itself
with Russia
and Great
Britain.
April 5,
1812.

merce Sweden was now carrying on under the license system, or on pretence of it, was immense. Fifteen hundred vessels, most of them American, lay in the roads of Goteborg in the end of 1810, provided with false papers, one-half of which proceeded up the Baltic, where they were for the most part confiscated by the Russian authorities. But these evasions to the last degree irritated Napoleon. The consequence was, that, early in January 1812, Napoleon entered Pomerania, overran the whole country, seized the fortress of Stralsund, confiscated all the Swedish ships in the harbour, imposed enormous contributions on the inhabitants, and armed all the merchant vessels in the harbours as privateers against the English commerce; while the French civil authorities, who everywhere, like vultures, followed in the rear of their armies, established themselves in the whole country, and began to levy contributions for the use of the imperial treasury.¹

This last act of hostility, following on so long a train of injuries, determined the policy of the Swedish cabinet. Bernadotte lent a willing ear to the suggestions of Russia; and on the 5th and 8th of April 1812, treaties were concluded between the courts of St Petersburg and Stockholm, by which the two contracting parties mutually guaranteed each other's possessions: and it was stipulated on the one hand, that, in the event of a war with France, Sweden was to assist Russia with a corps of thirty thousand men, who were to operate in conjunction with twenty thousand Russians, in the north of Germany; and that, in return, the Emperor of Russia was to guarantee Norway to Sweden, upon Denmark receiving an adequate indemnity in Pomerania; and in the event of the latter power refusing to agree to this exchange, Russia was to aid Sweden with thirty-five thousand men to conquer Norway. These treaties were shortly afterwards secretly communicated to the British government, from whom they met with the most favourable reception. Lord Wellesley, and subsequently Lord Castlereagh, who succeeded him

in the direction of foreign affairs, exerted themselves to the utmost to promote these amicable dispositions ; and, in consequence, a treaty of peace was concluded between Great Britain and Sweden, at Oerebro, on the 12th of July 1812 ; the British harbours were immediately opened to the Swedish vessels, and amicable relations re-established between the two countries. When Napoleon discovered that Sweden was inclining to the Russian alliance, he made the most vigorous efforts to endeavour to regain the former power to his own interest. For this purpose he offered to evacuate Pomerania, on condition that Sweden should aid him with thirty thousand men in his attack upon Russia ; and if they did so, he offered to restore to them Finland, and admit them into a participation of the benefits of the Confederation of the Rhine. But it was too late. Sweden had taken her part, and formed a sound judgment as to the real interests of her subjects ; and the proposals, therefore, were rejected, even though supported by all the influence of the Austrian minister at the court of Stockholm.¹

Previous to engaging in hostilities, Napoleon's preparations were of so extensive a kind as indicated his sense of the magnitude of the contest in which he was about to engage. By a decree of the senate, of the 31st December 1811, a conscription of 120,000 men was ordered, and this was soon after followed by preparations on a still more extensive, and indeed unprecedented scale. By another decree of the senate, of the 13th of March 1812, the whole male population of France, capable of bearing arms, was divided into three bans ; a hundred cohorts of the first of which were to be immediately organised and put into active service, to guard the coast and frontier fortresses ; and the two others were to be disciplined and equipped, without leaving their respective departments, but ready to take the field when called on for the service of their country.² By these means, it was calculated that a reserve of one million two hundred thousand men could

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July 12,
1812.

¹ Schoell, x.
101, 107.
Marten's
Sup. i. 431.
Bign. x.
408.

^{51.}
Napoleon's
vast mili-
tary pre-
parations.
March 13.

² Moniteur,
March 13,
1812. Bign.
x. 172.
Thib. viii.
372, 374.
Bign. x.
346.

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be raised to assist the Emperor's already gigantic forces. Nor was Russia behind-hand in her preparations; for, by a ukase of the Emperor on 24th September 1811, a levy of four males in the hundred over his whole dominions was ordered, which it was calculated would add a hundred thousand men to his regular troops.

52.
Napoleon's
proposals of
peace to the
English gov-
ernment.
April 17.

April 23.

According to his usual custom, when about to commence the most serious hostilities, Napoleon made proposals of peace to England. The terms now offered were, that the integrity of Spain should be guaranteed; that France should renounce all extension of her empire on the side of the Pyrenees; that the "reigning dynasty" in Spain should be declared independent, and the country governed by the national constitution of the Cortes; that the independence and security of Portugal should be guaranteed, and the house of Braganza reign in that kingdom; that the kingdom of Naples should remain in the hands of its present ruler, and that of Sicily with its existing king; and that Spain, Portugal, and Italy, should be evacuated by the French and British troops, both by land and sea. To these proposals, Lord Castlereagh replied, that if by the term "reigning dynasty," the French government meant the royal authority of Spain and its government, as now vested in Joseph Buonaparte and the Cortes assembled under his authority, and not the government of Ferdinand VII., the true monarch of Spain, and the Cortes assembled by his authority, no negotiation could be admitted on such a basis. No reply was made by Napoleon to this answer; and it is evident that the proposal was made with no real prospect of an accommodation, but merely to sow suspicion between the courts of London and St Petersburg, or to give him the advantage which he always desired, of being able to hold out to Europe, at the commencement of a new war, that he had in vain made proposals of accommodation to his enemies.¹

¹ Schoell, x.
128, 129.
Parl. Deb.
xxii. 1074,
1075.

When hostilities had been thus long and openly anti-

cipated between France and Russia, it is of little moment to inquire what were the immediate and ostensible grounds which led to rupture between the two powers. Down to the very commencement of hostilities, notes continued to be interchanged between Champagny and Romanzoff, which did little more than recapitulate the mutual grounds of complaint of the two cabinets against each other. Napoleon continually reproached Russia with the imperfect execution of the Continental System, the imperial ukase of the 31st December 1810, the armaments in the interior of Russia, and the fortifications on the Dwina; the transference of powerful forces from the Danube to the Niemen; and the protest of Alexander against the incorporation of the duchy of Oldenburg with the French empire. On the other hand, the ministers of Russia represented that these measures, though apparently hostile, were defensive merely, rendered necessary by the immense accumulation of French troops in Poland and the north of Germany, the invasion of Swedish Pomerania, the extension of the French empire over the whole Hanse Towns and to the Baltic Sea, and the incorporation of the duchy of Oldenburg with Napoleon's empire. The distress of Alexander at the approaching rupture was so manifest that he did not attempt to conceal it from the French ambassador. "Why," said he, with tears in his eyes, to General Lauriston, "did Napoleon not more fully explain his wishes to me at Tilsit? I do not wish to engage in commerce with the English, but I cannot prevent the neutrals doing so. The joy of England must be great to see two such powers going to war." Nevertheless, Alexander offered to come to an accommodation, and dismiss his warlike armaments, on condition that France should evacuate Prussia and Swedish Pomerania, reduce the garrison of Dantzic, and come to an arrangement with the King of Sweden. This ultimatum remained without any answer on the part of the French government. Napoleon had taken his resolution to make a grand

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53.

Final negotiations between France and Russia.

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April 24,
1812.
1st Maret to
Romanzoff,
April 25,
1812. Kou-
rakin to
Maret, April
24, 1812.
Schoell, x.
130, 135.
Hard. xi.
371, 375.
Bign. x.
422, 459,
460, 461.

display of his military power on the banks of the Vistula, and, if prevented by submission from conquering Russia, to show at least that he could overawe it. But in this expectation he was mistaken; it was soon sufficiently evident that the decision of both sovereigns had been finally come to; for on the 29th April Alexander arrived at Wilna, and in the middle of May Napoleon set out for Dresden. Alexander stated the grounds of the rupture to General Lauriston in these words: "I have nothing to ask of the French Emperor; my patience will never be exhausted; if he wishes to find me, he must come to seek me. The Emperor will lose in me a good ally, a firm friend. I am well aware what is his genius and his military resources, but I, too, have good soldiers; we shall defend ourselves."¹

54.
Views with
which the
contest was
regarded in
Europe.

All Europe was held in anxious suspense by the evident approach of the dreadful conflict which had so long been preparing between these two colossal empires, which were thus about to bring the whole forces of Christendom into the contest. Influenced, however, by the calamitous issue of all former wars against Napoleon, but slender hopes were entertained of any successful result of this last resistance now attempted in the north. The power of Napoleon appeared too great to be withstood by any human efforts; even the strongest heads and the boldest hearts could anticipate no other issue from the war than the final prostration of Russia, the conquest of Turkey, and the establishment of French supremacy from the English Channel to the Black Sea. The English still followed with intense interest the energetic career of Wellington in the Peninsula; but his fate too, it was evident, was wrapped up in the issue of the approaching contest; and they were sanguine indeed who could hope for anything but disaster to the British arms if Napoleon, victorious over Russia and Turkey, were to bring back his conquering legions from the Vistula and the Danube to the banks of the Ebro. A general despair in consequence

seized the minds of men ; it seemed doubtful if even the British navy in the end could secure the independence of this favoured isle : and the general subjugation of the whole civilised world was anticipated—probably to be rescued from slavery only by a fresh deluge of northern barbarians.

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CHAPTER LXXI.

DESCRIPTION OF RUSSIA, AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE WAR.

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1.
Slow but
steady
growth of
the Russian
empire.

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE is a state of such vast strength and boundless resources, that it is obviously destined to make a great and lasting impression on human affairs. Its progress has been slow; but it is only on that account the more likely to be durable. It has not suddenly risen to greatness—like the empire of Alexander in ancient, or that of Napoleon in modern times—from the force of individual genius, or the accident of casual fortune; but has slowly advanced and been firmly consolidated during a succession of ages, from the combined influence of ambition skilfully directed, and energy perseveringly applied. It received its greatest development from the French Revolution. The experience acquired, and the spirit called forth during the contest for existence, then doubled its power; and the cloud which had hitherto overshadowed in obscure and gloomy grandeur the north of Europe, now emerged, like the genie in the Eastern fable, an armed giant, from the stroke of Napoleon.

2.
Analogy in
this respect
of the phy-
sical and
moral
world.

There is no example in the annals of the world of an empire thus slowly and steadily advancing to greatness, which has not long endured, and left indelible traces of its power on the pages of history. The probable length of life may be anticipated with tolerable certainty to national, not less than individual existence; it is in the duration of growth and adolescence that the measure

of future maturity and decay is to be found. Experience proves that this is not a mere fanciful analogy, suggested by the obvious resemblance of the growth of communities to that of single men, but a fixed law of nature—a part of that mysterious unity of design which runs through every part of creation, and blends together the minutest object in the material, with the sublimest combinations in the moral world. If we compare the winged insect, which, called into perfect being with the first rays of the summer sun, runs through its brilliant span of existence before his orb has set in the west, with the majestic growth of the oak, which beholds successive generations of men expire under its increasing boughs, and stands forth after the lapse of seven centuries a still undecayed remnant of olden time—we shall have a lively image of those ephemeral dynasties which glitter awhile in the rays of fortune, “a moment bright, then lost for ever,” contrasted with those more durable powers—like Rome in ancient, or Britain and Russia in modern times—which, slowly but steadily advancing through a long course of ages, derive only additional strength from prosperous, and increased fortitude from adverse times.

The extent and fertility of the Russian territory are such as to furnish facilities of increase and elements of strength which no other nation in the world enjoys. European Russia—that is, Russia to the westward of the Ural mountains—contains a hundred and fifty thousand four hundred square marine leagues, or about one million two hundred thousand square geographical miles—being ten times the surface of the British islands, which contain, including Ireland, one hundred and twenty-two thousand. Great part, no doubt, of this immense territory is covered with forest, or lies so far to the north as to be almost unproductive of food ; but no ranges of mountains or arid deserts intersect the vast extent, and almost the whole, excepting that which touches the Arctic snows, is capable of yielding something for the use of man. The boundless

3.
Extent and
statistics of
the Russian
empire.

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steppes of the south present inexhaustible fields of pasturage, and give birth to those nomad tribes, in whose numerous and incomparable horsemen the chief defence of the empire, as of all oriental states, is to be found. The rich arable plains in the heart of the empire produce an incalculable quantity of grain, capable not only of maintaining four times its present inhabitants, but affording a vast surplus for exportation by the Dnieper, the Volga, and their tributary streams, which form so many natural outlets into the Euxine or other seas ; while the cold and shivering plains which stretch towards Archangel and the shores of the White Sea, are covered with immense forests of oak and fir, furnishing at once inexhaustible materials for shipbuilding and supplies of fuel. These ample stores for many generations will supersede the necessity of searching in the bowels of the earth for the purposes of warmth or manufactures for the inhabitants of the empire.¹*

¹ Malte-Brun, vi. 638, 639. Hassel's Tables of Russian empire.

4. Surprising variety of climate, and extent of latitude in Russia.

* Humboldt, vi. 67.

It is stated by Humboldt—and the fact gives us an almost overpowering idea of the extent of the savannahs of the New World—that while one end of the pampas of Buenos Ayres is charged with the snows of the antarctic circle, the other is overshadowed by the palm-trees of the tropics.² The dominions of the Czar, even in Europe, afford an example of an extent of almost level surface, stretching over an equally broad space of the globe. While, in its northern extremities, the cold is so intense, and vegetation in consequence so stunted, that a birch-

* The extent of the forests in the northern provinces of Russia is almost inconceivable. From actual measurement, it appears that, in the three governments of Vologda, Archangel, and Olonitz alone, there are 216,000,000 acres of pine and fir—being about three times the whole surface of the British islands, which contain 77,000,000. In one government alone, there are 47,000,000 acres of forest. It appears from M. Hermann's calculations, that there are in thirty-one governments in the north of Russia, 8,195,295 firs well adapted for large masts, each being above thirty inches in diameter—a number more than sufficient for a long supply of all the fleets in the world—besides 86,869,000 fit for building houses. In twenty-two governments only, there are 374,804 large oaks, each more than twenty-six inches in diameter, and 229,570,000 of a smaller size.—See *Trans. de l'Académie Impériale de St Petersburg*, viii. 172-184; and MALTE-BRUN, vi. 632; and BREMNER'S *Russia*, ii. 31.

tree, full grown and of perfect form, can be carried in the palm of the hand ; in its southern latitudes, the vine, the apricot, and the peach, ripen on the sunny slopes of the Crimea, and fields of roses, which perfume the air for miles around, flower in luxuriant beauty on the shores of the Danube. In the northern provinces, corn withers, pasture is scanty, and the marshy meadows yield only a crop of mosses and rushes ; trees dwindle to shrubs, and at last entirely disappear on the sterile plains ; the plants are stunted, and the whole of vegetable nature proclaims the vicinity to the pole.* Farther to the south, vast forests of pine overspread the surface of the earth ; but "winter still lingers in the lap of spring." Masses of ice in caves, or under the shade of rocks, diffuse a perennial chill around ; innumerable lakes and marshes render the soil cold and unfruitful even in the height of summer ; and the earth, hidden from the sun over nineteen-twentieths of its surface by the dark shade of the fir, can hardly be made to bring scanty crops of oats and barley to maturity.¹

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¹ Malte-
Brun, vi.
443, 444,
457.

It is only on approaching the latitude of Moscow that grain crops are universal, and the country, as far as the eye can reach, exhibits a noble unbroken sheet of luxuriant harvests. Still farther to the south, immense steppes of verdant turf afford rich pasturage, even to the foot of the Caucasian snows ; while in the southern extremity of the Crimea, along the southern front of the Taurida range, the climate scarcely differs from the opposite shores of Anatolia and Asia Minor. Winter is there hardly felt ; the primrose and the crocus appear above the earth in the month of January, and the oak retains its green foliage

^{5.}
Luxuriant
riches of the
Crimea and
southern
provinces.

* "Orbis in extremi jacens desertus arenis
Fert ubi perpetuas obruta terra nives,
Non ager hic pomum, non dulces educat uvas ;
Non salices ripa, robora monte virent.
Neve fretum terris laudes magis : æquora semper
Ventorum rabie solibus orba tument.
Quocunque aspicias, campi cultore carentes,
Vastaque, quæ nemo vindicat, arva jacent."—OVID.

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through the whole year. The ever-verdant laurel grows beside the olive, the fig, and the date-tree, brought in former times to these mountains by the Greek colonists; the walnut, the peach, the nectarine, and apricot, flourish in the hanging woods, or rather natural gardens, in the valleys; the wild vine reaches the tops of the highest trees, and, descending again to the ground, forms, with the viburnum, festoons and garlands. "High hills, masses of rock, streams and cataracts, verdant fields and woods, and the sea that bounds the landscape, render the scene," says Pallas, "equal to any imagined or described by the poets. The simple life of the good Tartars, their cottages cut in the solid rock, and concealed by the thick foliage of the surrounding gardens; the flute of the shepherd, his flocks scattered on solitary hills, remind the traveller of the golden age. He leaves the people with regret, and envies the destiny of mortals ignorant of war, the frauds of trade, and luxury accompanied with all its vices."¹

¹ Pallas,
Tableau
Physique de
la Tauride,
37. Malte-
Brun, vi.
389.

6.
Capabilities
of Russia
for future
increase.

The productive powers of a country of such extent, and so diversified in natural advantages, may be considered as almost inexhaustible. Russia in Europe contains a thirtieth part of the terrestrial surface, and numbers among its subjects a fifteenth part of the human race.* If its European territory were peopled as Germany is, it would contain 150,000,000 souls; if as densely as Great Britain, which, considering the great proportion of Scotland which is mountain waste, is perhaps not beyond the bounds of possibility, it would contain 311,000,000.† The population of the whole empire, in Asia as well as

* The globe contains 37,000,000 square geographical miles of territorial surface, of which Russia in Europe alone occupies 1,200,000, or about a thirtieth part.—MALTE-BRUN, vi. 628.

† In Great Britain there are acres :—

England,	.	.	.	32,340,400
Wales,	.	.	.	4,752,000
Scotland,	.	.	.	19,738,930

56,833,330

of which 22,000,000 are at present waste, and 13,000,000 irrecoverably so.—See PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, i. 177.

Europe, at present (1849) about 64,000,000, adds nearly a million of souls annually to its number, and doubles in somewhat above sixty years.* Thus, before the year 1900, Russia will, to all appearance, contain 130,000,000 inhabitants; and by the year 1950, nearly 200,000,000—a rate of increase which, though it be great, appears by no means incredible, when the prodigious extent of fertile land still uncultivated is taken into consideration, and the corresponding and still more rapid augmentation of the Anglo-Saxon race in the savannahs of the New World. Nothing more is requisite to demonstrate the ascendancy which these two great families of mankind have acquired, or the durable impress which they are destined to communicate to human affairs.^{1†}

¹ Malte-Brun, vi. 638, 643, 628. Hassel's Stat. Tables of Russia, 1823. Balbi's Tables. Schnitzter, Russia, i. 23.

Dominions so vast, resources so boundless, might appear sufficient even for the greatest monarchy on earth. But, great as they are, they are inconsiderable when compared with the extent and capabilities of the Asiatic possessions of the empire. These amount to no less than 5,250,000 square miles, or above an eighth part of the whole land surface of the globe, and are thinly peopled by 11,000,000 of souls, being only at the rate of *two* inhabitants to the square mile.² Setting aside two-thirds of this immense region as sterile and unproductive, there will remain about 1,700,000 square miles capable of being cultivated, and yielding food to man. If these 1,700,000 square miles were peopled as Scotland is, they would support nearly 200,000,000 of inhabitants; if as densely as the whole British isles, above 500,000,000, or about half the whole present inhabitants of the globe. Without supposing that so

7.
Vast extent and capabilities of Asiatic Russia.

² Hassel's Tables, 1823. Malte-Brun, vi. 638.

* Mr Tooke states that, in his time, (1796,) the population of the empire was doubling in forty-nine years. Dupin now states it as doubling in sixty-seven years. Probably the medium of sixty years is about the truth.—See *Tooke's Russia*, ii. 146; and DUPIN, *Tour Commercial de la France*, i. 36.

† The births in Russia are to the whole population as 1 to 24; in France, as 1 to 44; Schnitzter estimates the duplication of the inhabitants of Russia as taking place in 80 years.—SCHNITZTER'S *Histoire intime de la Russie*, i. 23.

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¹ Malte-
Brun, ii.
387, 388.

immense a portion of the earth is to be permanently retained under one dominion, or that Europe is to be ever threatened with subjugation by a second irruption of barbarians from that great *officina gentium*, it is at least worth while to contemplate the vast room here afforded for the future expansion of the species, and interesting to inquire into the power which, even at present, retains the cradles of so many future nations under its sway.¹

8.
Future capa-
bilities of
Siberia.

From the chilly and desert character of more than half its extent, and the melancholy associations connected with the whole, as the scene of European exile and suffering, we are apt to regard Siberia as a region of perpetual night and desolation, incapable of being ever converted into the habitation of happy and industrious man. But though this is doubtless true of a large portion of its surface, yet there are districts of great extent in its southern provinces, watered by large and navigable rivers, which equal the finest parts of Europe in the fertility of their soil, and exceed it in the grandeur and sublimity of their scenery. Great part of this country is covered with noble forests, composed of trees of great size, and abundantly filled with game, on which the inhabitants live in rude plenty and lasting contentment. The rivers are almost all stored with fish, particularly salmon, which is found in such quantities, as almost to surfeit the inhabitants on their banks, by its luscious variety. The stupendous rocks which enclose the spacious waters of the lake of Baikal, the romantic range of the Altai mountains, approaching the Alps in elevation and beauty, are hardly excelled by the most celebrated scenery in Europe. The immense plains which stretch to the eastward, along the banks of the Amour, are capable of containing all the nations of Christendom in comfort and affluence. Traces are not wanting of a much more dense population having formerly inhabited these remote regions than is now to be found in them;

but the extreme difficulty of crossing the boundless steppes by which they are separated from the other abodes of man, and the circumstance of the greater part of their numerous rivers flowing into the Frozen Ocean, have hitherto prevented the human species from spreading in any considerable number into these vast reserves of humanity. It is steam navigation which is destined to effect the transformation. The river Amour, which flows from the mountains of Mongolia into the ocean of Japan, by a course twelve hundred miles in length, of which nine hundred are navigable, in a deep channel, shut in on either side by precipitous rocks, or shaded by noble forests, is the real entrance to eastern Siberia. And though the Chinese are still masters of this splendid stream, it is as indispensable to Asiatic, as the Volga is to European Russia; ere long it must fall under the dominion of the Czar, and constitute the principal outlet of his immense oriental provinces.¹

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¹ Malte-
Brun, ii.
489, 490.
Cochrane's
Travels in
Siberia, ii.
236, 260.
Ermann's
Travels in
Siberia, i.
217, 260.

Formidable as the power of Russia is, from the vast extent of its territory, and the great and rapidly increasing number of its subjects, it is still more so from the military spirit and docile disposition by which they are distinguished. The prevailing passion of the nation is the love of conquest; and this ardent desire, which burns as fiercely in them as democratic ambition does in the free states of western Europe, is the unseen spring which both retains them submissive under the standards of their chief, and impels their accumulated force in ceaseless advance over all the adjoining states. The energies of the people, great as the territory they inhabit, are rarely wasted in internal disputes. Domestic grievances, how great soever, are overlooked in the thirst for foreign aggrandisement. In the conquest of the world the people hope to find a compensation, and more than a compensation, for all the evils of their interior administration. Revolutions of the most violent kind have frequently occurred in the palace, and the order of succes-

9.
Character of
the people,
and their
universal
thirst for
conquest.

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sion, as in all eastern dynasties, has been often turned aside by the hand of the assassin ; but no republican spirit has ever animated any considerable part of the population. The troops who returned from Paris in 1815, brought with them a strong admiration for the institutions of western Europe ; and a large part of the officers who led the victorious armies of Alexander, were engaged for ten years afterwards in a dark conspiracy, which embittered the last days, perhaps shortened the life, of that great monarch, and convulsed the army and the capital on the accession of his successor. But the nation were strangers to that political movement ; the private soldiers who engaged in it were entirely ignorant alike of political rights, and the forms by which they are to be exercised ; and the authority of the Czar is still obeyed with undiminished oriental servility in every part of his vast dominions.*

10.
Universal
belief in
Russia that
it is one day
to conquer
the world.

If the belief in the ability of one Englishman to fight two Frenchmen is generally impressed upon the British peasantry, and has not a little contributed to the many fields of fame, both in ancient and modern times, where this result has really taken place, it is not less true that every Russian is inspired with the conviction, that his country is one day to conquer the world, and that the universal belief of this result is one of the chief causes of the rapid strides which Russia of late years has made towards its realisation. The passion for conquest, the thirst for aggrandisement, are among the strongest natural propensities of the human mind. They need neither the schoolmaster nor the press for their diffusion ; they are felt even more strongly in the rudest than in the most advanced and civilised ages : and have, in almost every

* At the time of the conspiracy to put Constantine on the throne, in 1825, which Nicholas only stemmed by extraordinary courage and presence of mind, the cry of the party in the army who supported him was, "Constantine and the Constitution !" Some of the soldiers being asked what was meant by the "Constitution," replied, they knew perfectly well : "It was the *new carriage* in which the Emperor was to drive."

age, impelled the wave of conquest from the regions of poverty over those of opulence. The north is, in an especial manner, the seat of this devouring ambition, and the fountain from whence it floods mankind ; for there are to be found at once the hardihood which despises danger, the penury which pants for riches, and the sterility which impels to conquest. It is these causes which have so often in past times impelled this torrent of northern invasion over the abodes of southern opulence.

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"Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar
Hath Scythia poured the living cloud of war ;
And where the tempest burst with sweepy sway,
Their arms, their kings, their gods, were roll'd away.
As oft have issued, host impelling host,
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast :
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
Her boasted titles and her golden fields ;
With grim delight the brood of winter view
A brighter day and heaven of azure hue ;
Scent the new fragrance of the opening rose,
And quaff the pendant vintage as it grows."—GRAY.

The meanest peasant in Russia is impressed with the belief that his country is destined to subdue the world ; the rudest nomad of the steppes longs for the period when a second Timour is to open the gates of Derbend, and let loose upon southern Asia the pent-up forces of its northern wilds. The fearful strife of 1812, the important conquests of 1813 and 1814, have added immensely to this natural disposition. The march through Germany, the capture of Paris, the overthrow of Napoleon, have spread, on grounds which can hardly be denied to be just, the idea of their invincibility ; while the tales recounted by the veteran warriors of the deeds of their youth, of the wines of Champagne, the fruits of Lyons, the women of Paris and Italy, have inspired universally that mingled thirst for national elevation and individual enjoyment, which constitute the principal elements in the lust of conquest.

The institutions and government of Russia are calculated in an extraordinary degree to foster in all ranks this ambitious spirit, and turn it in a permanent manner

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11.

Rank depends on military employment or the Emperor's gift.

to the purposes of national elevation. Though property is hereditary in its descent, and titles follow the same destination, *rank* is personal only, and depends entirely upon military grade or the sovereign's employment. Thus, a general of the emperor's creation takes precedence of a prince or count by birth; and the highest noble, if he has not a commission in the army, finds himself without either a place or consideration in society. This curious combination of the European principle of the hereditary descent of honours, with the Asiatic maxim that all rank is personal only, and flows from the gift of or office under the monarch, leads, however, to hardly any of the embarrassments in practice which might *à priori* be expected. For as the necessity of military office to confer personal rank is everywhere known, and, from the warlike turn of the people, cordially acquiesced in, it is universally sought after, and no one thinks of aspiring to any place in society who is not either actually, or by the emperor's gift, in the imperial army. The necessity of this real or fictitious military rank creates a multiplication of military honours and designations, which is not a little perplexing to foreigners, and sometimes excites a smile even in the Russians themselves;* but it is admirably calculated to foster a warlike spirit in the people, and, by keeping alive the feeling that distinction is to be won only by military honours, to procure for the nation the reality of military success.¹

¹ Bremner's
Russia, i.
210, 212.

In consequence of this universality of the military

* "There is another distinction in Russia, the frequency of which puzzled us not a little—that of *general*. We had heard several people, distinguished neither by warlike looks nor dress, spoken of as generals; some of whom were treated by the young officers with very little deference. One proved to be the *director of a theatre*, who held the office by gift of the Emperor, as many do who have never been in the army. It is lavished in a way which makes it perfectly worthless. We heard of an apothecary who is a general, and the Empress's accoucheur may be lieutenant-colonel. A penniless lieutenant, with his epaulettes on his shoulders, will get horses instantly in travelling, when a merchant who has thousands must wait for hours; so universal is the respect paid to military rank."—BREMNER'S *Russia*, i. 210, 211. These are trifles; but they are straws which show how the wind sets.

spirit, and all-prevailing sway of military ambition, the whole energies of the nation are, to an extent which appears almost incredible to one of the democratic states of western Europe, absorbed in the profession of arms. From the emperor's son to the peasant's child, the career of ambition lies in the same channel; the same objects of desire inflame and animate the heart. In the first years of infancy, the mind of the young Caesarowich is warmed by the recital of the exploits of his father's warriors; the long series of Russian victories is ever present to his mind; his earliest feeling of exultation, his proudest day in life, is when he is first arrayed in the mimic garb of the invincible grenadiers, who have carried the Muscovite standards in triumph to Paris, Erivan, and Adrianople.* He grows up under the influence of the same feelings; the troops salute him, not with the title of emperor, but of "father;" and his familiar and uniform appellation to them is, not soldiers, but "children."† The empire, in the opinion of the Muscovite peasant, is a vast family, of which the Czar is the head;‡ the chief interest of all its members is to enlarge the possessions and extend the

¹ Lond. i.
198, 208.
Brem. i.
360, 361.

* "In the interior of the *salle blanche* of the imperial palace at St Petersburg, on each side of the door, were placed two of the finest grenadiers of the regiment, measuring at least six feet two or three inches. When we had passed these in the outer hall, to our amazement we beheld the two little grand-dukes standing as sentinels, and dressed with minute exactness as privates of the regiment, with their knapsacks, greatcoats, and haversacks, all in marching order. To the inexpressible amusement of everybody, the Emperor himself then put the little princes through the manual and platoon exercises, which they both did incomparably. The universal delight, from the oldest general to the lowest subaltern of the guards, was something I cannot describe."—LONDONDERRY'S *Tour to Russia*, i. 248. The author has the satisfaction of giving an entire confirmation to this statement, if any were wanting, from the evidence of his highly respected friend, General Tcheffkine, aide-de-camp to the Emperor Nicholas, and chief of the mining engineers of Russia, who has frequently seen the little grand-dukes on mimic duty on these interesting occasions.

† "The troops do not salute, but, as every division passes, the emperor hails them with the accustomed cheer of 'How are you, *my children*?' To which they reply, in enthusiastic roar, 'We thank you, *father*.' The corps having defiled, the Emperor again touches his hat to all the officers, saying, 'Adieu, *messieurs*;' and then, walking from the regiment, he exclaims, 'I am satisfied with your zeal and conduct, *my children*.' 'We'll do better next time,' is

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13.
Its general
adoption
through the
empire.

glory of the domestic circle ; and their first duty to obey the imperial commands, and sacrifice themselves or their children, when required, to the imperial will.

When such is the tone of mind which pervades the palace and the peasantry, it may readily be believed, that the spirit of all the intermediate classes, and, in effect, of the whole empire, is essentially military, and that their energies are almost exclusively devoted to warlike pursuits. In truth, this object entirely occupies their thoughts, and everything else is comparatively neglected. Commerce, though flourishing,* is held in little estimation, and is for the most part engrossed by the merchants of the English factory. Agriculture, though not less than in the American states the main source of the national strength, is left to the boors, who prosecute it as their fathers did before them ; and, in consequence, make little advance in improved methods of cultivation. Judicial and other civil employments, save diplomacy, are held in utter contempt ;† the whole youth of the empire who aspire to any station in society, are bred for the army. One hundred and eighty thousand young men, the flower

then the cry from the battalions ; and, in the midst of this shout, his imperial majesty, accompanied by the little Caesarowich, mounts his open phaeton, and drives off.”—LONDONDERRY’S *Travels in Russia*, i. 224. The first time that the author heard these striking expressions used by the Czar and his troops was at Paris in May 1814, when Alexander reviewed his Guards on the road from the barrier of Neuilly to St Cloud. He will never forget the impression which these words, repeated by thirty thousand voices, in accents of rapturous enthusiasm, produced on his mind.

	1835.	1836.
* Exports of Russia, . . .	107,033,563	129,601,862 rubles.
Imports, . . .	165,636,702	180,913,929 do.

—LOND. ii. 145.

† “Nothing astonishes the Russian or Polish noblemen so much as seeing the estimation in which the civil professions, and especially the bar, are held in Great Britain. The judicial profession, and the whole class of legal practitioners, are everywhere despised and wretchedly paid ; and, as a natural consequence, the taking of bribes is all but universal.”—BREMNER, i. 344, 350.—A young Polish nobleman once energetically expressed to the author how much he had been “effrayé” when he heard that Sir Walter Scott was an *avocat* ; and if these pages should fall under the eye of any similar military youth, he will probably be not less horrified at finding the author has been bred to the profession of Cicero and Demosthenes.

of the population, comprising ten thousand officers, among whom are found almost all its talent and energy, are constantly at the public seminaries,* where military education is taught in the very best manner, and the whole knowledge communicated is of a kind to be available in warlike pursuits. Europe has much need to consider well how the pressure of sixty millions of men, doubling almost every half century, directed by the whole talent of the nation, educated at such seminaries, is to be averted.

And those who believe that a pacific era is arising—that commercial interests are to rule the world, and one great deluge of democracy to overwhelm all other institutions, would do well to contemplate the spirit and institutions of this state, which now possesses a fourteenth of the inhabitants and an eighth part of the whole surface of the globe.¹

As a natural consequence of this warlike spirit, and of the military institutions in the empire, military honours, badges, and other insignia, are universal, and distributed, both to civil and military servants, with a profusion which to an Englishman appears injudicious, and materially lessens their real value as a badge of merit. In the midst of these numerous decorations, however, there is one which none can wear but those who have really earned it, which cannot by its nature be prostituted to unworthy objects, and of which the Emperor is more proud than of the English order of the Garter—the medal given to all the soldiers who had served in the campaign of 1812. With this exception, however, and notwithstanding the numerous attempts to create distinctions by classes in the orders, they appear, at least to an English eye, exceedingly common; and Metternich expressed this

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¹ Krusen-
stern's
Instruction
Publique
en Russie,
Warsaw,
1837. Lond.
ii. 156, 159.
Marmont's
Voyages.

14.
Universali-
ty of decor-
ations to all
persons in
civil and
military em-
ployment.

	1836.
* Military pupils at military schools under the Grand-duke Michael,	8,733
Pupils at Navy-board schools,	2,224
Pupils at schools under Minister-at-War,	169,024
	<hr/>

179,981

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¹ Slade,
Russia in
1838, 174.

feeling with his usual felicity, when, on seeing at a Russian party the English ambassador enter the room in a plain blue coat, amidst the galaxy of stars with which he was surrounded, he exclaimed—"Ma foi! il est bien distingué!"¹

15.

Military
force of
Russia.

The military strength of the empire is proportioned to its vast physical resources, and the strong warlike disposition which distinguishes its inhabitants. It consists at present, (1840,) according to the authority of Marshal Marmont and the Marquis of Londonderry, who had access to the best sources of information, of six corps, or separate armies of the line, comprising seventy-two regiments of infantry, twenty-four of light cavalry, ninety batteries of foot, and twelve of horse-artillery. Each regiment of infantry contains seven battalions of a thousand men each; of which six are always on active service, and the seventh at the depot in the interior; so that the infantry of the line musters, at least on paper, above five hundred thousand men. In addition to this, there are twelve regiments of infantry and twelve of cavalry, twelve batteries of foot and four of horse-artillery, in the Guards; twelve regiments of grenadiers on foot, four on horseback, and seventeen grenadier batteries. There are also twenty-four regiments of heavy reserve cavalry, and twelve batteries of reserve horse-artillery; and the corps of the Caucasus, of Orenburg, of Siberia, Finland, and the interior, which number among them no less than a hundred battalions of a thousand men each, forty regiments of horse, and thirty-six batteries of artillery. Besides these forces, the emperor has at his disposal one hundred and forty-six regiments of Cossacks, each eight hundred strong, of which fifty-six come from the steppes of the Don, and are superior to any troops in the world for the service of light cavalry. If these immense bodies of men were complete, they would number above eight hundred and fifty thousand infantry, and two hundred and fifty thousand horse. But the ranks are far from

being filled up : innumerable officers in every grade have an interest in representing the effective force as greater than it really is, as they draw pay and rations for the whole, and appropriate the allowances of the men of straw to themselves ; and in no service in the world is the difference so considerable between the muster-rolls of an army on paper, and the real number of sabres and bayonets it can bring into the field. Still, after making every allowance for these well-known deficiencies, it is not going too far to assert, that Russia, without weakening her establishments in the fortresses and the interior, can produce four hundred thousand infantry, one hundred thousand horse, and fifty thousand artillerymen, for offensive operations beyond her frontier, though it would require more than a year to bring even the half of this immense force to bear on any one point in Europe or Asia.¹

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¹Marmont,
Voyages, i.
184, 189.
Malte-
Brun, vi.
635.

The total revenues of the empire at this moment do not exceed £14,000,000, (one hundred and forty millions of florins,) and are derived from a capitation-tax, to which every individual in the empire alike, whether serf or free, is subjected ; a tax on the capital of merchants ; the crown domains, which yield a large part of the public income, and arising from the *obrok*, or personal duty paid by the peasants of the crown, and the rent of the lands which they cultivate ; the customhouse duties ; the tax on the sale of heritable property, which is rated at five per cent ; the duty on spirits ; the salt monopoly ; and the produce of the imperial mines. It may appear surprising how forces so immense can be maintained by revenues so inconsiderable ; but the marvel ceases when the extremely small sums which suffice for the pay of the troops are taken into consideration. Dr Johnson's celebrated saying, " that eggs are a penny the dozen in the Highlands, not because eggs are many, but because pence are few," was never more strongly exemplified. The cost of a foot-soldier for a year in Russia is little more than a

^{16.}
Revenues of
the empire,
and small
cost of the
army.

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third of what it is in France, and a fifth of his cost in Great Britain; in the cavalry and artillery the difference is still more striking.* The nominal pay of the soldier—nearly a ruble (or about 1s.) a-day—is not inconsiderable; but so much of it is intercepted by rations and other deductions, some of which go to enrich his officers, that he has not *half a farthing per diem* to spend on his own comforts—a pittance, small as it is, which is nearly double what is enjoyed in the sea service. The Cossacks receive 8s. 6d. of clear pay annually, out of which they are obliged to furnish themselves with starched neckcloths. As some compensation, however, for the limited amount of his pay, every Russian soldier becomes free on entering the army; and he is entitled to his discharge after twenty years' service, on which occasion he receives four or five hundred rubles (£16 or £20) to stock a farm assigned to him on the crown domains.¹

¹ Marmont, Voyages, i. 189, 190. Bremner, i. 368, 371.

17.
Slavery of
the peasantry.

Predial slavery, as all the world knows, is general in Russia, excepting in the crown domains, and the territories of the Cossacks and Malo-Russians in the south, where personal freedom has been long established. This sullen line of demarcation, however, is much less strongly marked there than in many other countries, from the custom which prevails of the master allowing the serfs who have a turn for commerce or the arts, to engage in such lucrative employments, and realise their gains for themselves, upon paying him a certain *obrok*, or

	Francs.	£	s.
* Cost of a foot-soldier for a year in Russia,	120 or	4	16
„ „ in Austria,	212 or	8	9
„ „ in Prussia,	240 or	9	12
„ „ in France,	340 or	13	12
„ „ in England,	538 or	21	10

The magnitude of this disproportion is not to be explained alone by the difference in the value of money in each of these states when applied to the purchase of the necessaries of life; for between some of them, especially France and Great Britain, this difference is inconsiderable. Much more is owing to the difference in the habits of enjoyment and good living in the working classes in the European states; and in this respect the British soldier, as well as citizen, stands far ahead of all the rest.—See MARMONT, *Voyages*, i. 189, 190.

capitation tax annually—a practice which almost lets in to the industrious slave the blessings of freedom. Even to those who remain at their pristine occupations of the axe and the plough, the bond which attaches them to the soil, though often felt as galling at one period of life, proves a blessing at another. The labourers on an estate constitute, as they formerly did in the West Indies, the chief part of its value; and thus the proprietor is induced to take care of his slaves by the same motives which prompt him to do so with his buildings or cattle.¹

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¹ Cox's
Travels,
iii. 183.
Clarke, i.
176. Tooke's
Russia, b.
iv. c. 1.

Relief in sickness, care of orphans, maintenance of the maimed, or in old age, are important advantages to the labouring classes even in the most favourable circumstances, and with all the facilities for rendering themselves independent, which the habits of civilised life, and the power of accumulating and preserving capital arising from the interchange of commerce, afford. But in rude periods, when these advantages are unknown, and the means of providing during the vigour, for the weakness, of life, do not exist, they are of inestimable value. The long want of such maintenance and care for the poor is the true secret of the misery of Ireland; it would be a real blessing to its inhabitants, in lieu of the destitution of freedom, to obtain the protection of slavery.* Stripes, insults, and compulsory labour are no light evils; but they are as nothing compared to the wasting agonies of

18.
Its advantages in the state of society there existing.

* "I have no hesitation in saying, that the condition of the peasantry in Russia is far superior to the same class in Ireland. Provisions are plentiful, good, and cheap; good comfortable log-houses are to be seen in every village; immense droves of cattle are scattered over unlimited pastures; and whole forests of fuel may be had for a trifle. With ordinary care and economy the Russian peasant may become rich, especially in those villages situated between the two capitals. In Siberia, scarcely any full-grown man is to be found among the convicts who has not two or three horses, and as many cattle; and they yield him, from the price paid for their labour at the government prices, a sum adequate to the purchase of a pound and a half of meat and three of bread daily, in addition to the produce of the land allotted to the convicts."—COCHRANE'S *Travels in Russia and Siberia*, i. 79, and 190. It would be a happy day for the Irish peasantry, the slaves of their own heedless and savage passions, could they exchange places with the Siberian convicts, subjected to the less grievous yoke of punishment and despotism.

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¹ Clarke's
Travels, i.
90, and 170.
Cox's Tra-
vels, iii. 183.
Heber in
Clarke, i.
170. Tooke's
Russia, b.
iv. c. 1.

famine, the violence of ill-directed and ungovernable passions, which never fail to seize upon prematurely emancipated man. The servitude and forced industry of the serf fill up the interval, the long and important interval, between the roving independence of the savage, who lives by the chase or the milk of his herds, and the voluntary toil of the freeman, around whom artificial wants have thrown the unseen but riveting chains of civilised life. But for its existence, this wide chasm could never have been passed; for man will never labour voluntarily till he has acquired the habits and desires of an advanced stage in society; and those habits, when generally pervading the community, can exist only from the effect of previous centuries of forced labour.¹

19.
Mode of
levying the
troops.

The army is kept up by a compulsory levy of so many per hundred or thousand, raised by government under the authority of an imperial ukase. In general, five in a thousand is the annual quota which is required; but on pressing occasions, two or three per hundred are demanded; and on occasion of the French advance to Moscow, ten in the latter number were voluntarily voted by the Russian nobles. Each proprietor is obliged, in addition to the man, to furnish his outfit to government, amounting to thirty-three rubles (£1, 5s. 10d.) The day of drawing the men on the several estates is one of universal mourning and lamentation. The conscript leaves his paternal home with scarce a hope of ever seeing it again: his mother and sisters make the air resound with their shrieks; chains are often necessary to secure his appearance at the appointed place of muster; and his companions accompany him in tears for miles on the road to his destination. In this, however, as in other cases, where a separation from old habits is induced by irresistible necessity, the human mind ere long bends to the force of circumstances. With his military dress and the first use of arms, the young soldier puts off the recollection of former days; a new career of ambition, fresh rewards,

hitherto unknown desires, stimulate his mind ; he feels the dignity of a freeman, the elevation of a superior profession, and not unfrequently the most painful moment in life is afterwards found to have been the nativity of a more elevated state of existence. In one instance only, the natural feelings of grief at the separation of the young conscript from all who are dear to him, were overcome by a still holier feeling. When the regiments were raised in pursuance of the great levy which followed the French advance to Moscow, tears were shed in abundance when those on whom the lot had fallen took their departure ; but they were tears of joy and exultation upon the part of their relatives, not of sorrow ; and the only houses in which real grief was felt, were those whose sons were not called on to join their comrades in the sacred duty of defending their country.¹

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¹ Bremner,
370. Segur,
ii. 90. Bout.
ii. 117, 118.

Vast as are the military resources which this system of regular conscription, in a country so immense, and containing a population so rapidly increasing, places at the disposal of the Russian emperor, they form by no means the whole of those on which he has to rely. Whole nations of soldiers are contained in the Muscovite dominions, and are ever ready to start into activity at a signal from the Czar. The MILITARY COLONIES constitute an important and rapidly increasing part of the imperial possessions, and furnish no small addition to the warlike strength of the empire. They owe their origin to the Emperor Alexander, who, being struck with the advantages which similar establishments on the frontiers of Transylvania had long afforded to the Austrians in warding off the incursions of the Mussulman horse, resolved in 1817 to establish them on a great scale in different parts of his dominions.* The same system was extended and enlarged under the guidance of the able General De Witt, in the southern provinces, in 1821.

20.
Military
colonies.

* See for the Austrian frontier military colonies, MARMONT'S *Voyages*, i. 226, 228 ; WALSH'S *Constantinople*, 287 ; and CLARKE'S *Travels*.

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Several divisions of cavalry were colonised in this manner; and a floating population of seventy thousand wandering tribes was located on the districts allotted to them, to furnish recruits for the troops. The holders of these lands, which they receive from the crown, are bound, as the only payment they make for them, to lodge and maintain a soldier; and to labour for forty-four days in the year for the public works in progress in the country. There are already in the military colonies twelve thousand men, constantly ready and equipped, as a depot for the twenty regiments which are distributed in this manner; and the warlike spirit of the youth from whom the recruits are furnished, is perpetually kept alive by the recital of glories, perils, and plunder, which they hear from the veterans who are settled on the lands. The military spirit thus comes to animate the entire population: the *esprit de corps* is felt not by regiments alone, but by the whole flourishing colony by whom they are surrounded. As the experiment has met with entire success, and there is no limit to the extent of waste land which may be appropriated in the Muscovite dominions to these purposes, it is difficult to see any bounds to the addition which may thus be made to the power of the Czar, by a system which superadds to the military tenure of the feudal ages the regular organisation and powerful control of modern government.¹

¹ Marmont, Voyages, i. 193, 215.

21.
The Cossacks: their territory, character, and manners.

The COSSACKS are another race of colonised warriors, who all hold their lands by military tenure, and are bound, when occasion requires, to furnish the whole male population capable of bearing arms for the service of the state. Those of the Don inhabit a territory of immense extent: it spreads over no less than 57,600 square geographical miles in extent—a surface nearly two-thirds of that of the whole British islands, and incomparably more level and fertile. Some part of it is as fruitful as the Ukraine, and it is all destitute of hills. But a considerable portion, though covered with a velvet carpet of

turf, is probably destined to remain for ever, from the want of rivers or brooks, inhabited only by nomad herdsmen. Unlike the peasants of the greater part of Russia, the people of this district are entirely relieved from the fetters of servitude. "Free as a Cossack" is a common proverb through all the south of the Muscovite dominions. Their political privileges, even in the midst of the Russian empire, approach to those of democratic equality; and the active roving habits of the race are strongly exemplified even in those circumstances where they are fixed in one situation, and permanently engaged in the labours of agriculture. Though their industry there is very conspicuous, the villages clean and thriving, the houses white and comfortable, and the produce of their fisheries on the Don very considerable,* yet the dispositions of the people are still those of their Scythian forefathers. Horses comprise their chief, often their only luxury; equestrian races or games their great delight; five hundred or a thousand stallions constitute the studs of the great, three or four are possessed by the poor; boundless pastures furnish to all the means of ample subsistence: and all are alike ready, at the call of their beloved hetman, to follow his fortunes to the scenes of European plunder or glory.¹

¹ Malte-Brun, vi. 402. Brenner, ii. 428, 446.

Under a pure and cloudless heaven are spread out the boundless steppes of the Ukraine, of which it was long ago said that "the sky is ever serene, and storms and hurricanes are unknown." One who has been accustomed to the gloomy forests, dark clouds, sterile lands and marshes, of the north of Russia, can hardly figure to himself the boundless fields waving with corn, the valleys strewed with the fresh down of blooming vegetation, the meadows whose luxuriant covering conceals from the eye the waters of the streams. Still less can the habitations

^{22.} Description of the Ukraine, and character of its inhabitants.

* The export of fish and caviare from the country of the Don Cossacks is no less than 500,000 rubles, or about £25,000 annually: a sum equivalent to at least £100,000 a-year in this country.—MALTE-BRUN, vi. 402.

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of the people in the northern part of the Muscovite dominions, convey an idea of the cottages in the Ukraine, built of carved trees covered with white-washed clay, with smooth polished earthen floors. The dirty peasant of Great Russia, with his long tangled hair, bespeaks the Tartar rule; while the villager of the north, with his clear blue eyes and light brown hair, attests the Sclavonian blood. But in the Ukraine, the serious reflecting countenance of the man, his tall figure, half-shaven head, long mustaches, and abrupt speech, discover the mingled descent of the ancient Russian and savage Asiatic. His dress bears marks of the Lithuanian and Polish rule of four centuries. He is slow, taciturn, and of few words; but shrewd, intelligent, and rigorous in the observance of promises, both given and received. While the one lives entirely in the present, the other dwells chiefly on the past. Remind the Cossack of his former glories, his recent historical achievements, and you have found the passport to his heart: his countenance will brighten, his eye kindle; you will hear the song of the steppe, and be astonished at the cheerfulness of his disposition.¹

¹ Polewoy,
Hist. of
Russia, ii.
317.

23.
Incredible
devastation
of the Tartar
tribes in
Southern
Russia in
former
times.

The origin of this singular people accounts in a considerable degree for their peculiar character. Nature and man have stamped an impress upon their minds which can never be effaced. Placed on the frontiers of Europe and Asia, they have always dwelt in the plains which, from the earliest ages, have been the highway by which Scythian violence passed on to civilised plunder. Amidst tombs which, rising on either hand, far through the boundless wastes, marked the blood-stained passage of the multitudinous nations whose names, as Chateaubriand has said, "are known only to God;" amidst walls raised by unknown hands, and cemeteries whitening with the bones of Russians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, and Poles, the Tartars still discerned the tracks which led from their far-distant steppes to the seat of civilised man. Flights of rapacious birds announced their approach, and the mourn-

ful omen was confirmed by the glowing sky that reddened as their torches consumed the villages. The barbarian hordes, in their sudden attacks, overpowered the inhabitants, and seized the fruits of their toil before the warlike proprietors could assemble from their castles for their defence. Prompt in aggression, prompter still in flight, they dragged into captivity the youth of both sexes, driving off the herds, and leaving behind them only the silence of ashes and the corpses of the slain. Notwithstanding this ceaseless havoc, the population still sprang up afresh upon that beautiful soil; cut up, as it was, says a Sclavonian poet, "by the tramp of horses, fertilised by human blood, and white with bones—where sorrow grew abundantly."¹

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¹ Gnorowski, Insurrection of Poland in 1830-31, i. 47, 48.

It was amidst the misery and from the effects of this constant devastation, which continued for several centuries, that the Cossack nation took its rise. Two corners of land, overlooked in the great streams of conquest to the south-west, remained as places of refuge for the fugitives—one beyond the Don, on the plains stretching to the Sea of Azof, and the other beyond the islands of the Dnieper, towards the Black Sea. They formed the cradle of this singular people, as the Lagunæ of the Po were, from a similar cause and at the same period, of the Venetian Republic. About sixty miles below Kiev, the Dnieper forms a variety of islands, upwards of seventy in number. The banks of the river, here fringed with wood, there steep or marshy—the deep caverns in the rocky islands, concealed by spreading trees or tangled thorn-bushes, offered a favourable place of refuge, when the open country was overrun by the barbarians. At the epoch of the first general invasion of the Tartars, and again during the Lithuanian wars, many persons found shelter here; and their number was subsequently increased by the arrival of adventurers, guided by necessity or the love of change; by deserters from the Lithuanian, Polish, Hungarian, and Wallachian ranks; by fugitives from

^{24.}
Origin of the Cossacks in these disasters.

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Tartar bondage; or by serfs escaping from the oppression of their lords. The motley crew was at first held together, and prevented from overstepping its limits, by a rule enforcing, during the common calamity, celibacy, fishing, and hard labour. Gradually, as the danger rolled away, these restrictions were forgotten, and they ventured upon secret excursions to the neighbouring plains, which, by degrees, extended down the Dnieper, and along the shores of the Black Sea, to the very walls of Constantinople. In more peaceable times, they spread over the adjoining plains, fed vast flocks on the steppes, and cultivated the earth; and there, in huts built of clay, they led a rude life, mindful only of the subsistence of the moment. But they retained the character imprinted on them by their origin, their necessities, and their situation. Fishing in the Don and the Dnieper ever remained, and still continues, a favourite occupation of the people, and a principal source of their wealth; the necessity of flight to existence was constantly felt; and the nation, true to its origin, still looked for its riches in prosperity, its refuge in adversity, to the swiftness of its steeds. "Let the flame of invasion," said they, "consume our huts: in a week we will plant new hedges, fill up our ditches with earth, cover our thorns with reeds—soon others shall arise. Sooner shall the foe be wearied with destruction than we with restoration."¹

¹ Gnorowski's Poland, i. 73.

25.
Their inveterate nomad habits.

Independence, amidst a world of serfs, gave charms to this precarious existence; freedom sweetened the toils and lightened the dangers of these unfettered rovers. Their own industry, the spoils of others, brought them plenty: mounted on swift chargers, free as the wind of the steppes, they enjoyed their liberty; and generations grew up amidst the clashing of swords and the song of battle. Singing the airs of his native wilds, the Cossack of former days left his home on an expedition to Azof, Sinope, or Constantinople; a beautiful captive often became his wife, the richest stuffs his attire, his enemies'

best weapons his arms. He returned home with his trophies, distributed his spoils, and took no care for the morrow : but the trophies of his prowess were religiously preserved ; his children played with his sword, or arrayed themselves in the panoply of his enemies. These habits still continue, though the objects and scene of his warfare are changed ; and the Cossack youth point to the cuirasses of the French horsemen, or the standards of the Imperial Guard preserved in their churches ; and honour these prizes of recent valour, as their ancestors did the trophies of Trebizond or the spoils of Constantinople.¹

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¹ Gnorowski's Poland, i. 74, 75.

Nearly the whole Cossacks of the Don, capable of bearing arms, attended the standard of Platoff to the neighbourhood of Moscow, and by their indefatigable activity as light horse, mainly contributed to the astonishing results of the campaign. Nothing now arrests so certainly the volatile youth of the plains of the Don as the recital, by the old warriors, of their exploits on the fields of Germany and France, their tales of the marvels of Paris, of the wines and the women of the south. The shining armour of the cuirassiers of the Imperial Guard, the trophies of the hard-fought field of Eylau ;² the eagles and standards which were won amidst the cannonade of Leipsic, hang, the objects of universal veneration, in the church of Tcherkask, the principal town of their country. And though their institutions are so free as almost to rival the ruinous democratic constitution of Poland, the turbulence of pastoral republicanism is gradually yielding to the seductions and the address of the imperial court, and on all important occasions it is effectually drowned in the indelible passion for warfare and plunder.³

26.
Influence of the victories in Germany and France on the Cossacks.² *Aute*, ch. xliv. § 67.³ Malte-Bran, vi. 402, 403. Bremner, ii. 425, 436. Clarke's Travels, i. 283, 296.

Above a hundred thousand Cossacks, distributed in one hundred and sixty-four regiments, are now to be found in the Muscovite armies ; their physical force, and the vast influence which they exerted in the later years of the war, render them an object of serious importance

27.
Their numbers, appearance, and manners.

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1 Karamsin,
vi. 476.

and interest to all the European states. The word "Cossack" means a volunteer, or free partisan;¹ their whole service is voluntary; one of their most highly valued privileges is, that they cannot be chained, when enrolled and on the march to the military stations, as the other conscripts of Russia are, when they prove refractory. They hold their lands by military tenure; and, by the terms of it, every individual is obliged to serve four years in the Russian armies, and this they do in time of peace for a merely nominal pay. This service is to them rather an amusement and delight than a duty. Trained from early childhood to the use of the lance and sword; familiarised to the management of the small but active horse, which can undergo almost any fatigue, and seldom falls even in the roughest country, the young Cossack joyfully mounts the playfellow and companion of his boyhood, and wends his way, exulting, to the unknown but oft-imagined scenes of distant plunder. At home he is kind, gentle, and domestic in his habits; but when called to foreign warfare, he assumes at once the ferocious habits of his Scythian ancestors. Pillage is their principal object, and the whole produce of their marauding which will admit of being carried, is stowed away below the saddle; so that, after a long campaign, they sit fully a foot above the backs of their horses. They seldom, in former wars, gave quarter; but in the campaign of 1812, and the subsequent years, Alexander promised them a ducat for every French prisoner they brought in, which soon produced a plentiful harvest of captives.²

² Personal
Observa-
tion. Scott's
Napoleon, v.
263. Brem-
ner, ii. 432,
440.

28.
Their mode
of fighting,
and habits
in war.

Like other Asiatic horsemen, to whom they belong by descent, if not by birth, the Cossacks do not attack in a close body like the European cavaliers, but in a *swarm*, or loose charge, where each man selects his individual antagonist; and, with a loud *hourra*, they bear furiously down upon their opponents. In the course of the war in Germany, however, in 1813, they came to act in a

more regular and systematic manner ; and both then, and in the campaign in the following spring in France, frequently and successfully charged squares, and performed all the duties of regular cavalry. But it is chiefly in the service of light troops that the Cossacks are seen to advantage, and then their services are invaluable. Never had an army such eyes as they furnish ; none ever possessed a host capable of drawing such a screen before the observation of the enemy. Mounted on their hardy little horses, they have frequently been known to travel a hundred miles in twenty-four hours, loaded with arms and plunder ; and, in their heaviest marching order, they plunge into rivers, thread morasses, explore thickets, and cross the most fearful deserts, whether parched by the heats of summer or charged with the snows of winter. No army with the Cossacks in its front need fear a surprise ; none with them heading the pursuit of it can be secure against one. Their velocity, activity, and courage, render them peculiarly dangerous to a retreating, often fatal to a flying enemy. When the rearguard halts, and a respectable force collects to oppose their incursions, they never hazard an attack, but fly without hesitation, like the Parthians of old, till a more favourable opportunity of renewing the pursuit occurs ; and when the enemy again retires, they press upon his retreating columns, inundate the country on all sides of his line of march, and are frequently to be seen a hundred miles in advance of the main body of the pursuing force.¹

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¹ Personal
Observa-
tion. Scott's
Napoleon,
v. 364. Sir.
R. Wilson's
Camp, of
1807, 27,
28. Brem.
ii. 437, 446.

The naval power of Russia, though far from being inconsiderable, and now an object of well-founded and serious alarm to Great Britain, is not the direction which the national spirit naturally takes, nor that from which durable danger to other states is probably to be apprehended. At present, the Emperor Nicholas has thirty ships of the line and twenty-two powerful frigates at Cronstadt ; besides sixteen of the line and twelve frigates in the Black Sea. It has been maintained nearly at

29.
Naval force
of Russia.

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that level for the last thirty years ; and what renders it peculiarly formidable to England is, that this large force is not distracted by the defence of any colonies or distant possessions ; that it is kept constantly on the war establishment, and with stores and provisions on board ready for immediate operations ; that the Baltic fleet in summer manœuvres for some months with thirty thousand men on board ; that, though extremely deficient in nautical skill, the Russians are admirably trained to the practice of gunnery, and stand with devoted resolution to their pieces alike in naval as military war ;* and that, under protection of the bastions of Cronstadt, and the castles of the Dardanelles, they possess alike in the north and the south impregnable places of refuge.¹

¹ Brem.
375, 376.

30.
General disinclination
of the nation
to the navy.

Still, though the danger to England is doubtless great while such a force lies within a fortnight's sail of London, with hardly any fleet at the disposal of the British government to protect the English shores,† it is evident that it is not from the naval power of Russia that the liberties of Europe are permanently to be endangered. The spirit of the nation is essentially military : territorial conquest, not commercial extension or distant colonisation, is her destined path. The despotic nature of the government, the closing of the Baltic by ice during half the year, and of the Euxine by the gates of the Dardanelles during the whole, are alike inconsistent with naval greatness. If England were animated with her ancient national spirit, and her government were of sufficient strength to direct a part of her vast maritime resources into the public service, she might behold with contempt the plaything of the Czar performing its mimic evolutions on the Baltic.² In the words of Demosthenes to the

² Bremner's
Russia, i.
375, 376.

* "Lay yourself alongside a Frenchman ; but outmanœuvre a Russian."—NELSON.

† "It is a mistake to say that Great Britain is utterly unprotected. She has *three ships of the line, and three guard-ships* afloat, to protect the shores of England."—*Speech of SIR CHARLES ADAM, Lord of the Admiralty, House of Commons, March 8, 1839. Parl. Debates.*

Athenian people, to whose situation in regard to Philip that of Britain to Russia in these times bears a striking, even a fearful resemblance—"It is your weakness which is his strength ; and he owes his present increase of power infinitely more to your indolence than to his own exertions."

There is one remarkable peculiarity of the Russian empire, which, to the people of the British isles, is a subject of peculiar interest and importance. Rich as her territories are in agricultural productions, there is one mineral, without which she can never attain to manufacturing greatness, which is almost altogether wanting. Coal is scarcely to be found to the west of the Ural mountains ; at least, where it is discovered, it exists in such inconsiderable strata as to be not worth working. The lid of the box in which this valuable mineral is found in the British islands is there ; the bottom, of red sandstone, is there also ; but the intermediate seams of coal and ironstone are very rarely found.* The latter occurs indeed in some places, and at Toulou extensive ironworks exist for the internal supply of the empire ; but without coal she can never compete, in the supply of great manufactories, with countries where fuel is supplied from the spontaneous bounty of nature in the mineral regions of the earth. Thus the destinies of England and Russia are as clearly traced out by the hand of nature, in the physical peculiarities of the two countries, as they are in the moral character and disposition of their respective inhabitants.

31.
Want of
coal in the
empire, and
its important
effects,

They are obviously intended for greatness in different lines : they are calculated to grow with each other's growth, and strengthen with their strength. The world is large enough for both ; and each will discharge its duty, and perform its mission best, by avoiding interfer-

32.
Different
destinies of
Great Britain
and
Russia from
this cause.

* This important fact I had from my highly valued friend Sir Roderick Murchison, President of the Geological Society of London, whose recent travels in Russia have elicited so much valuable information in regard to the mineral riches of that empire.

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ence with the path of the other. Destitute of coal, and scantily supplied with ironstone—with its principal harbours blocked up half the year by ice, and the greater part of its population far removed from the ocean in the midst of vast agricultural or pastoral plains—the people of Russia are as manifestly disqualified from attaining commercial or manufacturing greatness, as they are calculated by their vast numbers, enduring valour, and submissive obedience to their chiefs, to attain the summit of military power. Abounding with coal, richly endowed with ironstone, encircled by the storms of the German and Atlantic oceans, placed midway between European civilisation and American increase, Great Britain is as clearly marked out by nature to be the workshop of the world, as she is evidently fitted, by the industrious habits, active character, and independent spirit of her inhabitants, to perform the great work of maritime colonisation throughout the globe.

33.
Venality of
justice in
the Russian
dominions.

Justice is venal throughout the whole Muscovite, as in all oriental dominions. The judges are numerous, and abundant means of appeal, ostensibly calculated to check injustice, are provided. But the one thing needful is generally wanting—a conscientious spirit, strict discharge of duty on the bench, and public respect for their functions. This is the natural consequence of the military spirit of the people, and the almost exclusive direction of the national resources to warlike preparations. The salaries of the judges of all grades are so miserably small, that they are driven almost by necessity to eke them out by presents from the suitors; and so low does the judicial office stand in common estimation, that this is considered at once natural and unavoidable in such functionaries. Nothing surprises the Russians so much as to find that it does not equally stain the English ermine. An equal and impartial administration of justice is the appropriate and peculiar blessing of a free government; it can neither exist in a despotic monarchy nor a democratic republic;¹

¹ Bremner, i. 272, 284.
Malte-Brun, vi. 378.

for, in the first case, there is nothing to counterbalance the frowns of the sovereign—in the second, to withstand the passions of the people.

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But, for the same reason, the Russian monarchy is, in the general case, greatly superior to the British in external negotiation; and the diplomacy of the cabinet of St James's or the Tuileries has seldom proved a match for that of St Petersburg. This is the obvious result alike of the independence of the government of popular control, the strong ambitious spirit by which the nation is animated, and the concentration of nearly the whole of its civil talent in this one department. No seats in parliament are there to be won, no votes in the peers secured, by promoting titled frivolity or influential imbecility over the head of unconnected talent or diplomatic address. The cabinet feels that territorial aggrandisement is the principal bulwark of the throne, and that a reign which steps from acquisition to acquisition is never likely to feel the want of popularity. The nobles, aware of the absolute necessity of abilities to secure these advantages, overlook the elevation of merit, even from the humblest ranks, to situations where they may thus advance the national fortunes. It is the constant practice of the imperial ministers to promote young men of distinguished talent from the military or ecclesiastical schools into the civil offices; and as almost the whole youth of the empire who receive any education are to be found at one or other of these seminaries, and their number exceeds two hundred thousand, it is not surprising that a vast mass of talent is thus brought to bear upon the destinies of the state. The example of Maria Theresa, whose discerning eye discovered a future Thugut in the clever answers of a boy of fourteen in a public hospital at Vienna, has found many imitators in the Muscovite rulers; and in the search of talent they are limited to no localities, and willingly draw diplomatic ability from foreign states, or even from the ranks of their enemies.

34.
Great ability of the Russians in diplomacy.

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35.

Cause of
their supe-
riority in
this respect
to England.

It is the comparatively unrestricted power of doing this which constitutes one great source of the strength of absolute monarchies: it is the necessity of sacrificing talent to influence, in ordinary times, in almost every department of the state, which is the chief cause of the acknowledged inferiority of the public servants, whether civil or military, in constitutional monarchies. But, for the same reason, the rulers of a free government, when public danger or the necessities of the times have compelled them to overlook the ordinary sources of influence, and seek for talent wherever it is to be found, have an incomparably wider field to search, and, in general, will in the end bring a greater and more wide-spread mass of talent to sustain the national fortunes. In the first case, the foresight and energy of government supply the want of vigour and animation in the inferior ranks of society; in the latter, the ability and information of the middle and lower classes compensate, in the end, the weakness and vacillation of government. In the first instance, the government forces greatness upon the people; in the latter, the people force greatness upon the government. Hence the despotic state will be generally successful in the outset of a contest; but the democratic community, if it withstands the shock, is more likely to prove victorious in the end; and hence a nation which, like the Roman in ancient, or the British in India in modern times, unites the foresight of patrician direction with the vigour of democratic execution, can hardly fail, at least for a time, to obtain the empire of the world.

36.

Universal
corruption
which pre-
vails in the
inferior
authorities.

But while the steady persevering policy of the imperial cabinet, joined to the remarkable succession of able sovereigns who, from the time of Peter the Great, have swayed the Russian sceptre, has hitherto at least drawn forth talent in a surprising manner, both in the civil and military career, from the inferior ranks in the state; yet a latent, but almost incurable source of weakness is to be found in the all but universal corruption which pervades

inferior functionaries in every part of the empire. Doubtless there are some exceptions even in humble stations; and in the dignified situations of governors of provinces or fortresses, or high commands in the army, many of the most upright, patriotic, and honourable men in Europe are to be found. But these are the exceptions, not the rule. Generally speaking, corruption is universal in all but the higher offices of government, and even among them it is far from being unusual. The vast extent of the empire; the helpless condition and ignorance of the great majority of its inhabitants; the habits of abject submission to authority which they have imbibed from their religion, or derived from their eastern origin; the vice-regal pomp in which the governors of the principal provinces live; the distance of their governments from the central power; and the boundless authority which they enjoy—all conspire to render abuses easy, detection difficult, and punishment dangerous. The salaries enjoyed by the persons in authority are in general small, and their expenses considerable; it is perfectly understood, what is almost universally practised, that they make up the difference in perquisites, presents, or fees, which soon degenerate into absolute corruption. The denunciation of crime is often followed by the discovery and punishment of the criminal, seldom by restitution or redress: the official robber comes in place of the private depredator, and the last state of the injured party is often worse than the first.^{1*}

¹ Slade's
Russia in
1838, p. 370,
371. Brem-
ner, i. 344,
350.

In every country, however, except the most degraded, and those bordering on immediate ruin, there is, practically speaking, some check on the abuses of government. This check, which in Turkey was long found in the religious sway of the ulema, or the armed terrors of the

37.
Efficacy of
the Secret
Police, and
of the Em-
peror's ven-
geance.

* Information as to crimes is often avoided from its only superadding the vexation of a prosecution, to no purpose, to the loss already sustained. It is seldom that stolen property, though often recovered, reaches the private sufferer. The head of the police at Odessa, on a salary of £250 a-year, makes £3000.—SLADE'S *Germany and Russia in 1838-9*, 385-389; BREMNER, i. 46.

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janissaries, who, though no small abuse themselves, were the chief restraint on abuses in others, has hitherto in Russia been found in the unwearied activity, moral courage, and impartial severity of the emperors. A secret police is established through all parts of the Muscovite dominions. They are to Russia what the Lion's Mouth was to Venice, and, in a certain degree, supply the want of that perpetual check upon all but democratic corruption which the unfettered press of free countries occasions. The members of this police are known to every one, and are, in an especial manner, an object of apprehension to persons in authority. They collect information, receive secret complaints, accumulate evidence, and are in constant correspondence with the emperor, by whom the stroke of justice is to be dealt out. When a victim is selected against whom the evidence is clear, and whose enormities loudly call for public example, an order suddenly arrives for his seizure, degradation from office, and dismissal to Siberia. If he is of so high rank or station as to render such punishment difficult or dangerous to subordinate functionaries, the emperor himself sets out in his britchska, travels post, with almost railway speed, a distance of a thousand miles; calls the delinquent out at the head of his troops; and not unfrequently the terrible example is exhibited of a governor, holding almost royal dignity and authority, being seized unexpectedly when surrounded by his soldiers, his epaulettes torn from his shoulders, his head shaven, and himself sent off, in the dress of a convict, to the fortresses of Poland or the mines of Siberia. Alexander, notwithstanding his natural gentleness of disposition, and, still more, the present Emperor Nicholas, whose moral courage no dangers can daunt, have been particularly remarkable for the vigour, celerity, and impartiality, with which they exercise this awful but necessary attribute of sovereignty.¹

¹ Slade, 370,
373. Brem-
ner, i. 350,
351.

This system, however, though it may and does establish

an important check, at least upon the higher class of functionaries, when carried into execution by the justice of an Alexander or the energy of a Nicholas, who do not hesitate to travel from one end of the empire to the other, to inflict punishment on a powerful delinquent, is attended with obvious hazard and liability to abuse. Personal, and, still more, moral courage cannot always be reckoned upon on the throne ; the dissolute days of the Empress Elizabeth may return, and the functionaries of the empire may be delivered over to impunity or connivance, to enable a voluptuous monarch to enjoy undisturbed the pleasures of the court or the seraglio at St Petersburg. It is impossible to contemplate without shuddering the probable condition of the empire if such a state of things should arise—if a modern Sejanus were to wield the powers of the secret police, only to denounce the virtuous or induce the confiscation of the wealthy ; if the numerous spies throughout the Muscovite dominions were to be employed, like the infamous informers whom the pen of Tacitus has consigned to the execration of ages, in ransacking the provinces for worth to oppress, or iniquity to reward ; and obedient millions were, as then, to hail alike a Trajan or a Nero. Reflections of this kind arise unbidden in the mind upon the contemplation of the Russian empire. They recall at every step the mournful impression, that in its annals if a Caligula may be succeeded by a Nerva, an Antoninus may give place to a Commodus ; and they are fitted to inspire a deeper thankfulness for those institutions which, in the free states of western Europe, amidst all their concomitant evils, establish public prosperity on a broader basis, and strengthen the forces with which virtue combats the inroads of wickedness.

In this eternal conflict between the principles of good and evil, there is one, and one only, sheet-anchor to which Russia has to trust, and it constitutes the grand distinction between European and ancient civilisation. RELIGION is all-powerful with the bulk of the nation : it forms the

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38.

Evils and
dangers of
this system.

39.

Extraordi-
nary influ-
ence of reli-
gion in
Russia.

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true national bond of the empire ; the foundation at once of the authority of the throne and the morality of the people. When Alexander, amidst the terrors of the French invasion, issued proclamations breathing devout confidence in Almighty protection, and invoking the prayers of the Church to the throne of grace to aid the warriors in the deliverance of their country, he appeared to the astonished French to have gone back to the days of the Crusades, and to utter an incomprehensible jargon of mysticism and superstition. He spoke the language, however, of all others the most calculated to rouse the national efforts ; he touched a chord which vibrated alike in the hearts of the rich and the poor ; he inspired that lofty spirit, that sublime patriotism, which, looking for its reward in another world, is superior to all the dangers and temptations of the present. Nor was his policy erroneous, even with reference to worldly success. The lever was worth the wielding which broke the power of Napoleon ; the enthusiasm must ever command respect which fired the torches of Moscow.

40.
State of the
church and
the clergy.

The Greek, as is well known, is the Established Church of Russia, and that to which nineteen-twentieths of the people adhere. Its doctrines coincide in the main with those of the Romish persuasion, and the mass constitutes the chief part of its public worship ; but it differs from the Church of Rome in two essential particulars—the marriage of the parish priests, and the spiritual authority of the Pope. The first is enjoined, instead of being prohibited ; the second denied instead of being obeyed. The worship of figures, statues, or graven images of any kind, is unknown ; but ample amends is made in the innumerable crosses which are on almost every occasion made on the breast, and the devout adoration bestowed on painted or other *flat* representations of our Saviour, or their favourite saints. Among the dignified clergy are many men of profound learning and enlightened piety ; but the great mass of the parochial priests are little if at all

elevated above the peasants by whom they are surrounded, whose labours they share and to whose manners they are generally assimilated. Intemperance and other gross vices are very frequent among them ; and not a few are to be found, among the convicts of Siberia, suffering the just punishment of their crimes.¹

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¹ Bremner,
ii. 118.

Still the elements of incalculable usefulness are to be found among the Russian clergy. They are all supported by land of their own, which renders them independent, at least so far as subsistence is concerned. The profession of the clergy is in a manner hereditary, the sons of serfs not being permitted by their landlords to enter an employment which would deprive them of their services as labourers ; and they are looked up to with unbounded veneration by their flocks. The most pernicious doctrines of the Romish church—purgatory, dispensations, indulgences—as well as predestination, election, and other rigid Calvinistic tenets, which equally tend to loosen the bonds of moral obedience, are unknown. In the gradual elevation and cultivation of this established body of spiritual labourers, the true secret of Russian amelioration is to be found. All the efforts of its government should be directed to this object. Doubtless, in the present age, much that may be turned by scepticism into ridicule is to be found in their customs. But the experienced observer, versed in the ways of human wickedness, surrounded by the profligacy of civilised heathenism, and acquainted with the necessity of impressing the mass of men by considerations or acts which strike the senses, will not slight even the countless crossings on the breast, and bowing to the ground of the Russian peasantry. He will acknowledge in these rites the invaluable marks of spiritual sway which are thus testified by an illiterate people ; he will hope that an antidote to the temptations of the senses may thus be provided in the attractions of the senses themselves ; and expect more from a people thus impressed, than from the orgies of infidelity or the worship of the Goddess of Reason.²

41.
The utility
of the
church.

² Bremner,
ii. 118, 129.

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42.Peculiar
political
system of
the Russian
cabinet.

The policy of the Russian cabinet, from the earliest time that the Muscovite power has stood forth an object of alarm to the surrounding nations, has been governed by one ruling principle, which differs widely from that of any people who have hitherto made a great impression on human affairs. It is neither founded on the haughty maxim of the Romans, to spare the submissive and subdue the proud, nor the more politic system of the English, whether in Europe or Asia, to support the weak against the strong. It rests on a combination of physical strength with diplomatic address, of perseverance in object with versatility in means, which was never before exhibited on the theatre of the world. Its leading characteristic has been explained, perhaps with more candour than prudence, by the eloquent Russian historian Karamsin : —“The object and the character of our military policy has invariably been, to seek to be at peace with every body, and to *make conquests without war* ; always keeping ourselves on the defensive, placing no faith in the friendship of those whose interests do not accord with our own, and losing no opportunity of injuring them, without ostensibly breaking our treaties with them.”¹

The slightest survey of Russian history must be sufficient to show that this character is well founded ; and that, formidable as the military power of the state is, it has prevailed in every age rather from pacific encroachments than warlike subjugation.

¹ See Bjornsjerna on Brit. Emp. in East, 244.

43.
Its immense
physical ad-
vantages for
such a
system.

It has been observed that Russia can hardly fail in the end to obtain the victory over all her enemies, for she has two powerful allies always on her side—*time* and *space*. Relying with well-founded confidence on the inaccessible nature of the Muscovite territory—secured from attack on the north and east by the ices of the pole and the deserts of Tartary—open to invasion from the European powers only on the frontier of Poland, and capable there of wearing out even the greatest armies of the western world, by simply retreating until the

invader is enveloped in clouds of Asiatic horse, or finds his winding-sheet in the snows of an arctic winter—the cabinet of St Petersburg has the means, without material danger to itself, of profiting by the weakness and dissensions of its enemies. By never provoking war till a favourable opportunity occurs of prosecuting it to advantage, it can march, without ever receding, from one acquisition to another. The Russians rarely originate a contest, but are always ready to carry it on. Passion seldom makes them anticipate the period of action; success never relaxes the sinews of preparation.

So formidable is their weight, when fairly roused to exertion, that the powers with whom they are engaged in war, despairing of making any durable impression on such a colossus, are generally glad, even after victory, to purchase a respite from hostility by a cession of territory. Surprising to say, Russia has reaped greater advantages from her defeats than other nations from their victories. Even the disaster of Friedland was immediately followed by an important acquisition of territory; and the conferences of Tilsit brought her frontiers to the mouth of the Danube and the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. He must be little read in European annals, who is not aware how uniformly this system has been pursued by the Russian cabinet, and how signal has been the success with which it has been attended. Never since the god Terminus first receded with the Roman eagles in the provinces beyond the Euphrates, has so steady and uninterrupted an advance been made by an empire towards universal dominion; and it is hard to say, whether it has prevailed most by the ability of diplomatic address, or the vigour of warlike achievement.

When Peter the Great mounted the throne of Russia in 1689, she had no seaport but the half-frozen one of Archangel; and his first naval effort was the construction of two small vessels, which were floated down the Don to the Sea of Azoff. Secluded in boundless solitudes, the

44.
It is in consequence invariably a gainer by the issue of wars.

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LXXI.

1812.

43.

Successive
conquests of
the Russians
in their
early his-
tory.

Aug. 30,
1731.

Signed
Sept. 1773.

1774.

1781.

1781 to
1783.

1792.

1793.

1794.

1 Marten's
Sup. v. voce
Russia.

46.
Their pro-
gress in later
times.

Muscovite territory was hardly known to the European nations, and the Muscovite power estimated as nothing by the European cabinets. His successes over the Swedes gave him the first harbour which Russia possessed on the Baltic, but Smolensko was still the frontier town towards Poland; and Moscow, dimly descried through the haze of distance, was imperfectly known by having been twice taken and once burned by the victorious squadrons of the Lithuanians or Tartars. The battle of Pultowa and the treaty of Neustedt first gave the Russians the province of Livonia, and the site where Cronstadt and St Petersburg now stand; the disasters of the Pruth did not permanently check the progress of the empire. The partition of 1772 brought its frontier on the side of Poland to the Dwina and the Dnieper; by the treaty of Kainardgi, the Muscovite standards were brought down to the Crimea and the Sea of Azoff; vast acquisitions from Tartary, larger than the whole German empire, next spread its dominion over the boundless tracts of central Asia; the ukase of 1783 extended its sway over the Crimea, and the plains which stretch between the Euxine and the Caspian, as far as the foot of the Caucasus. The treaty of Jassy advanced their frontier to the Dniester, and brought the now flourishing harbour of Odessa beneath their rule; the infamous spoliation of 1793 gave them the command of Lithuania; the conquests of Suwarroff in 1794 extended their frontier to the Vistula, and the provinces embracing nearly half of the old kingdom of Poland. Even the disasters of Friedland and the treaty of Tilsit rounded their eastern frontier, by no inconsiderable province, at the expense of their ally, Prussia.¹

Great and alarming as these encroachments were, they yet yield in magnitude and importance to the prodigious extension which subsequent events have given to the Russian empire. By the conferences at Tilsit, she acquired the liberty of pursuing without molestation her conquest over the Swedes and Turks; and the treaties of Stockholm

in 1809, and Bucharest in 1812, gave her in consequence the whole of Finland, as far as the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, and extended her southern frontier to the Pruth, so as to confer the inestimable advantage of including the mouths of the Danube in her dominions. The astonishing victories of 1813 and 1814, and her formidable attitude at the close of the war, secured for her, at the congress of Vienna, not only a recognition of these important conquests, but the still more valuable acquisition of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, which added four millions to her dominions, and brought her frontier to within a hundred and eighty miles of both Berlin and Vienna, without the intervention of any defensible frontier to either. Various conquests over the Circassians and Persians carried the Muscovite eagles, between 1800 and 1814, across the Caucasus, and added the beautiful province of Georgia to their dominions; while the treaty of Turkaman Chai, in 1828, brought the bastions of Erivan and the peak of Ararat within their grasp, and rendered the waters of the Araxes the southern frontier of their Asiatic territories. If the war so imprudently provoked by the Turks, in 1828, has not ostensibly added to the dominions of Russia, it has done more; it has given security to, and rendered unassailable, those which she already enjoyed. Wallachia and Moldavia are now her tributary possessions; the Danube is in reality her southern European boundary; her eastern provinces almost encircle the Black Sea; while by the infatuation of England, in refusing the Turks aid against Mehemet Ali, a few years after, she has acquired the exclusive command of the Dardanelles. The Euxine can be navigated only by her vessels of war; and her navy in the south has acquired the immense advantage of possessing a vast inland lake, where navigation is difficult, and seamanship may be acquired, while access to enemies is excluded, and foreign attack may be defied.¹

CHAP.
LXXI.1812.
Sept. 17,
1809.
June 1,
1812.

1815.

Ukases,
1800, 1803,
1805, 1806,
1814, 1828.

1829.

1834.

¹ Progress
of Russia in
the East, i.
164. Lond.
1833.

It is impossible to deny, and fruitless to attempt to

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LXXI.

1812.

47.

Napoleon's
account of
the power
of Russia.

disguise, that an empire of such extent and resources is in the highest degree formidable to the liberties of Europe, and from its rapid increase of numbers is daily becoming more so. What Macedonia was to Greece, that Russia is to Europe : happy if it could be said that the resemblance stopped there, and that the inconstancy, impvidence, and impatience of taxation of the Athenian people, bore no resemblance to the similar characteristics by which the democracy in the British islands is now distinguished. Napoleon has left a graphic and warning picture of the capability of Russia alike to repel foreign invasion, and conduct external aggression, if led by an able and enterprising chief. "Backed," said he, "by the eternal ices of the pole, which must for ever render it unassailable in rear or flank, it can only be attacked even on its vulnerable front during three or four months in the year, while it has the whole twelve to render available against us. It offers to an invader nothing but the rigours, sufferings, and privations of a desert soil, of a nature half-dead and frozen ; while its inhabitants will ever precipitate themselves with transport towards the delicious climates of the south. To these physical advantages, we must join an immense population, brave, hardy, devoted, passive ; and vast nomad tribes, to whom destitution is habitual, and wandering is nature. One cannot avoid shuddering at the thought of such a mass, unassailable alike on the flanks and rear, being able at any time with impunity to inundate you ; while, if defeated, it has only to retire into the midst of its snows and ices, where pursuit is impossible, and reparation of loss easy. It is the Antæus of the fable, which cannot be overcome but by seizing it in the middle, and stifling it in the arms ; but where is the Hercules to be found who will attempt such an enterprise ? We could alone attempt it, and the world knows what success we have had. Show me an Emperor of Russia, brave, able, and impetuous—in a word, a Czar who is worthy of his situation, and Europe

is at his feet. He may begin his operations at the distance only of one hundred leagues from the two capitals of Vienna and Berlin, the sovereigns of which are the only obstacles he has to apprehend. He gains the one by seduction, subdues the other by force, and he is soon in the midst of the lesser princes of Germany, most of whom are his relations or dependants. A few words on liberation and independence will set Italy on fire. Assuredly, in such a situation, I should arrive at Calais by fixed stages, and be the arbiter of Europe."¹

¹ Nap. in
Las Cases,
iv. 81, 82.

ST PETERSBURG, the capital of this boundless dominion, is not less surprising as a work of art, than the empire of which it is the head, is as the growth of nature. Little more than a century ago, the site of this noble metropolis was a salt-marsh, lying between the Lake Ladoga and the Baltic Sea, in which the natural sterility of the north was enhanced by unhealthy swamps and a wretched soil. It is now one of the most splendid capitals in the world, containing three hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, and equalling any metropolis in Europe in the grandeur of its design and durability of the materials of which its public edifices are composed. The discerning eye of Peter the Great first appreciated the commercial advantages of its situation, and his perseverance overcame the physical disadvantages with which it was surrounded. At an enormous expense of life and treasure, his despotic power overcame the formidable obstacles of nature, and amidst the marshes of Livonia erected a noble gateway to European civilisation. Vessels of heavy burden, indeed, cannot come up to St Petersburg; but its outwork of Cronstadt possesses a spacious harbour, where fifty sail of the line can lie in safety, defended by stupendous and impregnable bulwarks from external assault; while the vast power of the Czars, guided by European skill, but inspired by oriental imagination, has constructed the metropolis of their empire on a scale of solidity and magnificence to which no parallel is to be found in modern times.²

48.
Description
of St Peters-
burg.

² Lond. i.
182. Malte-
Brun, vi.
510.

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LXXI.

1812.

49.

Its public
edifices.

More than in any other capital in Europe, its public edifices are built in a style which seems to aim at eternal duration. The Russian emperors have ransacked all the parts of their immense dominions to obtain the most costly materials for their construction. The granite which is scattered in huge masses through the marshes of Livonia, the marble which lies buried in the mountains of Taurida, compose the columns which decorate the exterior of these edifices; while the malachite of Siberia, the lapis-lazuli of the Lake Baikal, and the porphyry and precious stones of the Ural mountains, confer a matchless lustre on their interior apartments. The comparatively level surface on which it stands must ever prevent St Petersburg from vying with Rome, Moscow, Naples, Edinburgh, or Constantinople, in the beauty of its situation, or the imposing character of its distant aspect; and the construction of the greater part of the private buildings of brick is a bar to the metropolis acquiring that historic interest which arises from the sight of the dwellings of many successive generations, standing side by side, like the shadows of the dead, to impress the living. But the sublime public edifices, which the magnificence of successive sovereigns has erected in different reigns, remain enduring monuments of the vast power and great achievements of the Czars. The quays of granite will long attest the prophetic conceptions and far-seeing sagacity of Peter the Great;* the imperial palace, the façade of the Admiralty, the colonnade of the church of Cazan,† are durable proofs of the lofty spirit and grand ideas of Catherine. Not less do the church of St Isaac, destined to rival, if it cannot equal, St Peter's itself in magnitude and splen-

* These quays, built of vast masses of solid granite, are beyond all doubt the finest in Europe. All the principal buildings in the metropolis are assembled on their sides—the winter palace, the Admiralty, the English quay.—BREMNER, i. 82-83.

† The dome of this noble church resembles that of St Peter's at Rome, and it has a splendid converging colonnade in front, like its great prototype, of one hundred and thirty-two pillars. The interior rests on fifty-four beautiful pillars of gray granite, each of a single stone.—BREMNER, i. 98.

dour,* and the noble pillar,† which exceeds the columns of Trajan and Antoninus in elevation, and will equal the obelisks of Egypt in durability, seem destined to convey to the latest generations a faithful image of the warlike achievements and religious character which have secured immortal celebrity for the name of Alexander. But the rigour of the climate offers serious obstacles to architectural decoration, and will probably prevent St Petersburg from long retaining its present splendid aspect. The plaster fronts of the palaces, however beautiful when first put up, speedily give way, as they do in London, before the mingled cold and damp of the climate : a constant expenditure, impossible except during periods of prosperity, is required to prevent it from going to decay ; and even the granite of the quays and columns moulders and peels off in successive exfoliations from the excessive rigour of the winter.¹

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¹ Bremner's
Russia, i.
82, 84.
Lond. i. 92,
93. Malte-
Brun, vi.
504, 507.

The preceding sketch of the empire which has arisen to such an extraordinary eminence in recent times, will not be deemed misplaced by the reflecting reader even in a work of general history. It becomes the more appropriate, as it will be followed in a future chapter by a similar description of the progress and institutions of the Anglo-Saxon race in America : exhibiting thus, in the close of the wars of the French Revolution, portraits of

50.
Importance
of this
sketch of
Russia.

* The columns which support this gigantic cathedral are to be fifty-eight feet long, each of a single stone of polished granite. There are also to be forty-eight stairs of the same material. These columns are exactly the size of the celebrated ones, so well known to travellers, in the interior of the baths of Dioclesian at Rome.—See LONDONDERRY, i. 92.

† This column is one hundred and fifty-four feet high, including the figure at the top, and its diameter is fifteen feet. It is composed of mottled red granite, like that at Peterhead in Scotland, but susceptible of a higher polish. The column in the Place Vendôme is one hundred and forty feet, that in St Andrew Square, Edinburgh, with the figure, one hundred and fifty-two feet. The column of Alexander stands on massy blocks of granite, and is distinguished by its severe simplicity. The shaft of the stone is eighty-four feet high, and on its top stands a statue, not of Alexander, but of Religion, blessing the surrounding city. It has a pedestal and capital of bronze, made from cannon taken in the war of 1828 and 1829 from the Turks.—BREMNER, i. 88.

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the two mighty families of mankind who have risen to exalted destinies during the strife, and which, for good or for evil, have now, in an indelible manner, affixed their impress upon the history of the species.

51.

Napoleon's
secret rea-
sons for
the war
with Russia.

"They are little acquainted," says Marshal St-Cyr, "with the progress of ambition, who are surprised that Napoleon undertook the war in Russia. It is the nature of that desire, as of all other vehement passions, to be insatiable. Every gratification it receives only renders it the more vehement, until at length it oversteps the bounds of physical nature, and quenches itself in the flame it has raised. Napoleon knew well that his empire was founded on the prestige of popular opinion; that to maintain that opinion it was necessary that he should continually advance; that the moment his triumphs ceased, his throne began to totter. The public, habituated to victory by his successes, were no longer to be dazzled by ordinary achievements: he felt that his later triumphs must eclipse those of his earlier years; that if he only equalled them, he would be thought to have retrograded; that victories might have sufficed for the General of the Republic, but conquest must attend the steps of the Emperor of the West. To overthrow Austria, or overrun Italy, might suffice for him in the commencement of his career, but nothing could revive the enthusiasm of the people in later times but the destruction of the Colossus of the North. From the moment that he launched into the path of victory, he had perilled his fortune on a single throw—universal dominion or a private station."¹ Such is the permanent law of nature; the principle which leads to the punishment of national equally as of individual sins; the curb at once on the pride of aristocracy, the madness of democracy, and the rage of conquest; the fetter which checks the excesses of men, and the limit which restrains the rulers of nations.

Since the fall of the Roman empire, no monarch had

¹ St-Cyr,
Hist. Militaire, iii.
2, 3.

ever attained the commanding station which Napoleon occupied at the commencement of the Russian war. The influence of Charlemagne extended over a smaller surface, and embraced only barbarous states: the hordes of Timour were hardly as numerous, and incomparably inferior in discipline and equipment. Even the myriads of Attila or Genghis Khan exhibited no similar combination of the muniments of war, and foreboded no such permanent subjection of the liberties of mankind. From the shores of the Baltic to the mountains of Calabria, from the sands of Bordeaux to the forests of the Vistula, the whole forces of Europe were marshalled at his will; the accumulated wealth of ages was turned to the support of one gigantic power; and the military prowess which centuries of glory had fostered in rival states was combined under the banners of one victorious leader. The acknowledged supremacy of his genius had extinguished the jealousies even of the armies who had suffered most in his career. The Austrians and Italians, the Prussians and Bavarians, marched in the same ranks with the French and the Poles. The partition of Poland, the humiliation of Prussia, the conquest of Austria, were for a time forgotten: the conquerors of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena, were to be seen side by side with the vanquished in these disastrous fields. However much the sense of present humiliation might oppress the governments, or the recollection of recent wrongs rankle in the minds of the people he had vanquished, the necessity of present submission was felt by all. One only passion, the desire of conquest, animated the varied bands who followed his standard; one only career, that of military glory, remained to the youth in the realms he had subdued.¹

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1812.
52.

Vast extent
of his power
for that
enterprise.

¹ Segur, i.
125. Vict.
et Cong.
xxi. 119,
127. De
Pradt, Var-
sovie en
1812, 48,
54.

During the spring of 1812, the whole roads of France and Germany were thronged by cavalry, infantry, and artillery, hastening to the scene of the approaching conflict. The varied aspect and splendid equipment of these troops excited the strongest feelings of enthusiasm in the

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1812.

53.

Universal
enthusiasm
with which
the expedi-
tion was re-
garded in
the French
empire.

people through whom they passed. It appeared impossible that any human efforts could resist the immense force which was converging towards the Vistula. The presence of Napoleon insured victory; immediate advancement and lasting glory awaited those who distinguished themselves in the combats that were approaching. Such was the general enthusiasm which was excited in every part of the Emperor's vast dominions, that young men of the richest and the noblest families eagerly solicited employment in an expedition where success appeared certain, resistance impossible, and danger unlikely. All heads were swept away by the torrent; ambition, in every age and rank, was dazzled by the apparent brilliancy of the prospect. The expedition, said they, which is preparing, will throw that of Egypt into the shade. Never had the instinct of war, the passion for military glory, more strongly seconded the ambition of the chief of an empire. "We are setting out for Moscow, but we shall soon return," were the words with which the joyous youth everywhere took leave of their parents, their relations, their friends. The march to St Petersburg or Moscow seemed only a military promenade—a hunting-party of six months' duration, in which little danger was to be met, but ample excitement experienced—a last effort, which would place the empire of Napoleon, and the glory of France, beyond the reach of danger. The magnificence of the spectacle, and the brilliancy of the prospect, spread these feelings even amongst the people of the vanquished states: the expected restoration of Poland, and humiliation of Russia, gave an air of romance to the approaching expedition: and thousands breathed wishes for its success, who were destined soon to be aroused by nobler emotions, or to perish in a holier cause.¹

¹ Ségur, i.
101, 128,
131. Fain,
MS. de
1812, i. 46,
47. De
Pradt,
Varsovie en
1812, 58.

Notwithstanding, however, the general enthusiasm which animated the warlike multitude, the different nations of whom it was composed were inspired by very different feelings; and though the enthusiasm of military

success retained the soldiers of all the states in willing subjection, and the resplendent chains of the empire held their inhabitants for the time in sullen obedience, yet the elements of discord existed, and it might have been foreseen would break out, if any serious disaster befell the head of the confederacy. The Prussians beheld with ill-suppressed grief their banners associated with those of the conqueror and oppressor of their country: the Austrians, after having contended for twenty years with France, blushed at seeing themselves ranged as auxiliaries under the power with whom they had so long struggled for mastery; even the Germans of the Rhenish Confederacy, notwithstanding their longer union with the troops of Napoleon, were filled with discontented feelings, and could not disguise the conviction, that every victory they gained for the imperial despot was riveting more firmly the fetters about their own necks. The Poles alone, cheered by the anticipated restoration of their country, and indignant at the repeated wrongs they had experienced from Russia, advanced with joyful steps to the conflict, and prepared to strike for the cause of national independence, not for the interests or ambition of any external power. Yet such is the marvellous effect of military subordination, and of the point of military honour, that the enormous assemblage of armed men were animated by one common feeling of warlike enthusiasm, and the commands of Napoleon were as readily obeyed by the Italians, Germans, or Prussians, as by the Guards of the French Empire.^{1*}

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1812.

54.

Different
feelings of
the troops
of different
nations.

¹ Chambray,
Guerre de
Russie, I.
165, 166.

In one important particular, however, the composition of the army was very different from what it had been in

* Well might the Russians exclaim with the British chief in Tacitus,—
“Nostris illi discessionibus ac discordiis clari, vitia hostium in gloriam exercitus sui vertunt; quem contractum ex diversissimis gentibus, ut secundæ res teneat, ita adverse dissolvent: nisi si Gallos, et Germanos, et (pudet dictu) Britannorum plerosque, licet dominationi alienæ sanguinem commodent, diutius tamen hostes quam servos, fide et affectu teneri putatis: metus et terror est infirma vincula caritatis; quæ ubi removeris, qui timere desierint, odisse incipiunt.”—
TACITUS, *Agricola*, 32.

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1812.

55.

Disinclination of the marshals and older officers for the campaign.

the earlier periods of the Republic. Though the young officers and fresh conscripts, who had their fortunes to make, were animated with the utmost ardour, yet the older generals and marshals, whose fortunes were made, and in whom age was beginning to extinguish the fires of youth, were by no means equally eager for the contest. Having nothing further to look to in military advancement, and not feeling "the necessity of conquest to existence," which, in every period of his career, was so strongly experienced by their chief, they beheld with ill-disguised aversion the mortal conflict in which they were now about to be engaged, and sighed for their palaces, their chateaux, and their pleasures, instead of the hardships and privations of a Russian campaign. Napoleon perceived and lamented this change in his old companions in arms: he felt no such refrigeration in himself, and was astonished that they did not follow him in the close of his career with the same ardour as in its commencement. Unable, however, to overcome their repugnance to bold counsels, he gradually estranged himself from their society, restrained his burning thoughts within his own bosom, and not unfrequently withdrew from a council of marshals into an embrasure of a window, where he opened his mind in unreserved communication with some young general of division, whose ideas were more in harmony with the undiminished energy which he felt in his own breast.¹

¹ Fain, i. 46, 47.

56.

Views of the Russian government on the approaching contest.

The Russian government was fully aware of the approaching danger, and had for a considerable period been silently preparing to meet it. Upwards of a year before, a large portion of the Turkish army, as already noticed, had been withdrawn from the Danube, and the main strength of the empire collected on the Niemen.² The Emperor Alexander had, by the address of his aide-de-camp Chernicheff, obtained an apparently accurate detail of the strength of the grand army, its destination, and the corps of which it was composed; though, as was

² *Ante*, ch. lxix. § 89.

afterwards experienced, giving a deceptive idea of its strength greatly inferior to the reality. He resolved to oppose to the vast preparations of the French Emperor the indomitable perseverance of northern valour; and, without provoking the contest, to undergo everything rather than yield in the strife. The nobles, at this crisis, rallied round the throne with a spirit worthy of the Roman senators; and the poor peasants, ignorant of the magnitude of the danger by which they were to be assailed, prepared to die in defence of their country and their religion. Military spirit prevailed to a considerable degree in the Russian army, but by no means to the extent which subsequently existed after the unparalleled successes of the war. The disastrous issue of all preceding contests with France, and the doubtful event of the war with the Turks, had spread a desponding feeling both through the government and the people. Alexander and his council were prepared indeed to resist; but it was rather with the mournful and magnanimous resolution of perishing in defence of their country, than from any confident hope of being able to achieve its deliverance. They had to contend with a monarch of consummate military talents, whose career of victory had been unbroken, commanding an army inured to conquest by twenty years of success, and who now led on the forces of more than half of continental Europe to overwhelm the resistance of its only remaining independent power.¹

¹ Bout. i.
103, 106.
Sav. iii. 141.

In such a conflict they were well aware the chances of victory, the hope of success, lay all on the other side. Worldly motives, usually so powerful in the human breast, could in vain be appealed to; but Alexander found the means of meeting the emergency in those higher and more generous principles, which, unknown in ordinary times, unfelt by ordinary men, yet exist in every heart, if not overwhelmed by the intensity of selfish desires, and not unfrequently defeat all the calculations of the most experienced observers, by the brilliancy with which they

57.
Religion
and patriot-
ism, the
principles
to which
they ap-
pealed.

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shine forth on extraordinary occasions. RELIGION and PATRIOTISM were the principles to which the Russian government appealed in the awful crisis; and they met with a responsive echo in every heart within their dominions. Every proclamation to the people, every address to the nobles, breathed the language of religious or patriotic devotion. The Emperor, neither confident nor depressed, appeared prepared to combat to the last man in defence of his country, and, if necessary, be the last martyr in its cause. The French, like mankind in general, ridiculed sentiments of which they were ignorant, and stigmatised as fanatical the efforts of the Russian authorities to imprint a religious character upon the contest; little aware that the forces of revolution, in other words the passions of the world, cannot be successfully combated but by an appeal to religious emotion, that is, the motives of heaven; and that, when the Emperor Alexander elevated the standard of the cross, he invoked the only power that ever has, or ever will, arrest the march of victorious democracy.¹

¹ Fain, i.
76, 317.
Chamb. i.
176.

58.
Prepara-
tions of the
Russian go-
vernment to
resist the
invasion.

It was not without due consideration, and a full appreciation of the sacrifices with which it would be attended, that the cabinet of St Petersburg had adopted the resolution of engaging in a war of life or death with the French empire. They had carefully studied the warfare of Wellington in Portugal; and a military memoir of extraordinary ability, drawn up by Colonel Knesbrek, still preserved in the archives of St Petersburg, had pointed to the sagacious and scientific campaign of that general in 1810 as the model on which the defensive system of Russia should be founded.² General Phull, who was the principal councillor of the Emperor on military subjects, strongly recommended a retreat into the interior, accompanied with operations of detachments on the enemy's flanks and rear—a plan which the Emperor the more approved, that its efficacy had been demonstrated in the English general's immortal stand at Torres Vedras.

² Hard. ix.
274.

It was justly observed by both these able officers, that the nature of the Russian territory, its vast extent, boundless forests and scanty cultivation, in a peculiar manner promised success to such a series of operations ; while the resolute character of its inhabitants, submissive to the commands of the Emperor, strongly tinctured with religious feeling, insured the most implicit obedience to his mandates. To support the system of operations, an intrenched camp, capable of containing the whole Russian army, had been constructed at Drissa to defend the approach to St Petersburg. A strong *tête-de-pont* at Borissow covered the passage of the Beresina by the route of Moscow ; and the ramparts of Smolensko, the bulwark of Old Russia, were armed with cannon, and put in a respectable state of defence. But none of these strongholds were capable of resisting the vast forces which Napoleon had at his disposal, nor indeed were they designed for that effect. They were intended only as obstacles to retard the advance of his army, leaving it to other and more powerful agents to accomplish his destruction.¹

¹ Clausewitz, Camp. of 1812, 13, 14. Bout. i. 164. Fain, i. 176. Bignon, x. 392.

For this purpose, the Russian armies, as those of Wellington did down the valley of the Tagus, were to retire slowly into the interior of the empire ; the country, as they fell back, was to be denuded of its inhabitants, and laid waste ; clouds of light horse were to harass the flanks and cut off the foraging parties of the advancing enemy ; and every effort was to be made to rouse the rural population, and inspire them with a religious zeal in the great contest in which they were about to be engaged. By these means it was hoped the forces of the French Emperor, great as they undoubtedly were, would be gradually wasted away. Every step they advanced in a desolate realm would bring them nearer their ruin ; and the very magnitude of his army would ultimately prove an insupportable encumbrance, from the impossibility of providing subsistence for such a multitude. But it was

59.
General plan of the campaign on their part.

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impossible to rouse a national spirit in Lithuania, because its inhabitants, ancient Poles, being seized with the desire of recovering their independence, were animated with the strongest feeling in favour of the invaders ; and therefore this system could really be carried into effect only when the army reached Smolensko, the ancient frontier of Russia. And the erroneous information which Cher- nicheff had obtained at Paris as to the strength of the French army, led the Emperor to miscalculate the force which would be requisite to repel it, and rendered necessary a much further retreat, and more extensive sacrifices than had at first been contemplated.¹

¹ Chamb. i.
176, 177.
Fain, i. 176.
Bout. i. 164.
Clausewitz,
Camp. of
1812, 14.

60.
Desponding
feelings of
the English.

The repeated defeats of the Russians, in the preceding wars with Napoleon, spread a desponding feeling throughout Great Britain in regard to the approaching contest. Taught by the disastrous consequences of former coalitions, the British government made no attempt to stake the last chance of Europe on the hazardous issue of continental war ; and, contrary to all former precedent, they neither offered, nor would Russia accept, any pecuniary assistance. Mr Perceval stated in the House of Commons, before the war commenced, that Russia engaged in the contest on her own responsibility, and without any instigation on the part of England ; and the Czar sought to animate the patriotism of the people by the assurance that they stood alone in the contest, and would share with none the glory of success.²

² Parl. Deb.
May 7,
1812.

61.
Military
preparations
of the
French Em-
peror for
the contest.

The forces which Napoleon at that period commanded, amounted to the enormous number of twelve hundred thousand men, almost all in the highest state of discipline and equipment. Of these eight hundred and fifty thousand were native French, and of that body only three hundred thousand were engaged in the Spanish war. A population of forty-three millions in the French empire, and eight more in the kingdom of Italy and the Illyrian provinces, afforded apparently ample means of recruiting his losses. But the conscription had ceased to be produc-

tive from the arrival of the period when those destroyed in the early Revolutionary wars occasioned a chasm in the births of 1794 and 1795, and consequently in the population between eighteen and twenty years of age. For this reason a conscription of a hundred and twenty thousand men which had been decreed by the senate on 3d February 1811, and another of the like amount on the 20th December in the same year, had not produced any considerable addition to the effective strength of the army. Napoleon resorted, therefore, before engaging in this terrible contest, to an extraordinary method of providing for the security of his dominions.¹

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The whole inhabitants of the French empire, and of the kingdom of Italy, capable of bearing arms, were formed into three bans, as they were called—the first comprehending all those from twenty to twenty-six years of age; the second from twenty-six to forty; the third, from forty to sixty years of age. One hundred and twenty thousand of the first ban was immediately placed at the disposal of the minister of war. This extraordinary measure, unknown in any former contest, both demonstrates how fatally the conscription had operated upon the male population of France, and may be regarded as one of the first prognostics that the empire had reached the limits of physical nature, and approached its fall. The weakness of age fell at once upon it, when the chasms occasioned by the dreadful wars of 1793 and 1794 appeared in the male population which should be available at this time for the purposes of the conscription. The total failure of the conscription after 1811, demonstrated that the early wars of the Revolution had mowed down the race from which the defenders of the empire should have sprung.²

¹ Moniteur, March 13, 1812. Bout. i. 80, 81, 88. Jom. iv. 52.

62.
Extraordinary levy of the ban and arrierbans in France.

² Senatus-Consultum, March 13, 1812, Moniteur. Bout. i. 88, 89. Jom. iv. 52. Sav. v. 273. Vict. et Conq. xxi. 118, 119. Goldsmith, iv. 542, 723, and 751.

The grand army itself, which was now concentrated in Poland, or ready to support the movements of those in advance, was divided into thirteen corps of infantry and four of cavalry, and amounted to the immense aggregate

63.
Force of the French army.

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of five hundred thousand men, besides a hundred thousand who afterwards joined, and took a part in the campaign.*

Of these above eighty thousand were cavalry, and they were supported by thirteen hundred pieces of cannon. Nearly twenty thousand chariots or carts, of all descriptions, followed the army; and the horses employed in the artillery, the cavalry, and the conveyance of the baggage, amounted to the unprecedented number of one hundred and eighty-seven thousand. No such stupendous accumulation of armed men had yet been formed in modern times, or probably since the beginning of the world. Of this prodigious armament, however, only two hundred thousand were native French; the remainder were Germans, Italians, Poles, Swiss, and Austrians, whom the terror of the French arms had compelled, how unwillingly soever, to follow their banners. "*Exercitus mixtus ex colluvione omnium gentium; quibus non lex, non mos, non lingua communis; alius habitus, alia vestis, alia arma, alii ritus, alia sacra.*"†

1Jom. iv. 52.
Chamb. i.
386. Oginski, iii. 138.

64.
Forces of
the Russians
on the frontier
and in
the interior.

The forces which the Russian empire had to oppose to this crusade were much less considerable at the commencement of the campaign, but they were constantly increased as the war rolled into the interior of the empire; and before its close the armies on the two sides were nearly equal. Its regular forces amounted, in the close of 1811, to five hundred and seventeen thousand men; but of these nearly seventy thousand were in garrison, and the remainder dispersed over an immense surface, from the Danube to the Gulf of Finland, and from the Niemen to the Caucasus. Two successive levies had, however, been effected since that period, which furnished most seasonable supplies of disciplined men to the armies, as they were successively thinned by the casualties of war. To oppose

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXXI.

† "An army made up of the dregs of all nations; which had no laws, customs, or language in common; whose dress, habits, arms, rites, and religion, were dissimilar."—Livy, xxviii. chap. 12.

the invasion of the French, the Russians had collected two hundred and seventeen thousand in the first line, and thirty-five thousand in the second; and the army of Moldavia, amounting to fifty thousand, ultimately appeared on the scene, and took an active share in the closing operations of the campaign. Their united strength was nearly three hundred thousand, of which fifty thousand were cavalry, and they brought into the field upwards of eight hundred pieces of cannon.* The forces of the French, therefore, exceeded those of the Russians by nearly three hundred thousand men; but the former were at an immense distance from their resources, and had no means of repairing their losses, whereas the latter were in their own country, and supported by the devotion of a patriotic and courageous people. By the foresight of the government, thirty-six depots, in the provinces bordering on the supposed theatre of war, had been formed to supply the losses occasioned by the campaign,¹ and proved of the most essential service in the progress of the war.[†]

¹ Bout. i.
106, 112,
152, 154.

Napoleon's troops, at the commencement of the campaign, were divided into three great masses. The first, two hundred and twenty thousand strong, under the immediate orders of the Emperor, was destined to overwhelm the first Russian army, under the command of Barclay de Tolly, who had only one hundred and twenty-seven thousand at his disposal. The second, consisting

65.
Division of
Napoleon's
forces at the
outset of the
campaign.

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXXI.

† Clausewitz gives the following account of the Russian force:—

On the Polish frontier,	180,000 men.
On the Dwina,	30,000
In Finland,	20,000
In Moldavia,	60,000
Eastern frontier,	30,000
Interior,	50,000
Garrisons,	50,000
Cossacks,	20,000

440,000

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of seventy-five thousand, under Jerome, was to crush Prince Bagrathion, whose forces were only forty-eight thousand ; the Viceroy, Eugene Beauharnais, at the head of seventy-five thousand, was charged with the important task of throwing himself between these two Russian armies, and preventing their reunion. Besides these great armies, the right wing of the French, thirty thousand strong, under Schwartzberg, was opposed to Tomasoff, who had forty thousand under his orders ; and the left, of the same strength, under Macdonald, was destined to act against Riga, where Essen, with an inconsiderable force, awaited his approach. In two months the Russians would have had a hundred and fifty thousand more men in the field : it was the desire to gain a decisive success before these came up, which made Napoleon anxious to begin the war.¹

¹ Claus. 14.
Bout. i. 152,
157. Jom.
iv. 51, 53.
Ségur, i.
139.

66.
General aspect of the Polish provinces adjoining Russia.

The face of the country on the western frontier of Russia is in general flat, and in many places marshy. Vast woods of pine cover the plains, and the rivers flow in some places through steep banks, in others stagnate over extensive swamps, which often present the most serious obstacles to military operations. The roads, straight as an arrow, run in a direct line, amidst interminable forests of pine, the dark monotony of which impresses a feeling of melancholy on the mind. Cultivation in Lithuania is so inconsiderable in extent, that the fields of corn seem cut out of gloomy wastes of marsh or forest ; the villages are few and miserable ; the little industry which exists is owing to the Jews, who reside in the towns in great numbers. Inhabiting a rich country, the Poles are destitute of the common necessities of life : employed in raising magnificent crops of wheat, they seldom taste anything but rye-bread, oats, or the coarsest barley. The miserable aspect of the country attracted the notice even of the careless followers of Napoleon's army.² But the warlike spirit of the people was undecayed, and the peasants, equally with the nobles, retained

² Bout. i.
122, 123.
Labaume,
20. Burnet's Poland, i. 90.

that aptitude for war, and facility at assuming its discipline and duties, which in every age has formed their honourable characteristic.

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Napoleon left Paris on the 9th May: the Empress Maria Louisa accompanied him to Dresden. The whole sovereigns of Germany were there assembled, including the Emperor Francis and the King of Prussia. The Empress had left Vienna as a sacrifice to the interests of her country: she returned to the Elbe beside the conqueror of the world, surrounded by the pomp of more than imperial splendour. The theatres of Paris had been transferred to Dresden; the assembled courts of Europe there awaited her approach; the oldest potentates yielded to the ascendant of her youthful diadem. During the magnificent series of pageants which followed her arrival, flattery exhausted its talent and luxury its magnificence; and the pride of the Cæsars was forgotten in the glory of one who had risen upon the ruins of their antiquated splendour. No adequate conception can be formed of the astonishing power and grandeur of Napoleon, but by those who witnessed his residence on this occasion at Dresden. The Emperor occupied the principal apartments of the palace; his numerous suite were accommodated around; the august guests of the King of Saxony all looked to him as the centre of attraction. Four kings were frequently to be seen waiting in his antechamber; queens were the maids of honour to Maria Louisa. With more than eastern munificence he distributed diamonds, snuff-boxes, and crosses among the innumerable crowd of princes, ministers, dukes, and courtiers, who thronged with oriental servility around his steps. Whenever he appeared in public, nothing was to be heard but praises of his grandeur and magnificence. The vast crowd of strangers, the superb equipages which thronged the streets, the brilliant guards which were stationed in all the principal parts of the city,¹ the constant arrival and departure of couriers from or towards every

67.
Napoleon
leaves Paris.
Splendour
of his re-
sidence at
Dresden.

¹ Ségur, i.
108. Jom.
iv. 40, 41.
Fain, i. 63,
67. De
Pradt, Var-
sovie, 36,
37. Las Cas.
ii. 361.

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part of Europe, all announced the king of kings, who was now elevated to the highest pinnacle of earthly grandeur.

68.
His confident anticipations of success in the campaign.

No fears for the issue of the gigantic expedition which he had undertaken, ever crossed the mind of the Emperor, or of the cortège of kings and princes by whom he was surrounded. "Never," said he, "was the success of an expedition more certain; I see on all sides nothing but probabilities in my favour. Not only do I advance at the head of the immense forces of France, Italy, Germany, the Confederation of the Rhine, and Poland; but the two monarchies which have hitherto been the most powerful auxiliaries of Russia against me, have now ranged themselves on my side; they espouse my quarrel with the zeal of my oldest friends. Why should I not number in a similar class Turkey and Sweden? The former at this moment is, in all probability, resuming its arms against the Russians: Bernadotte hesitates, it is true; but he is a Frenchman: he will regain his old associations at the first cannon-shot; he will not refuse to Sweden so favourable an opportunity of avenging the disasters of Charles XII. Never again can such a favourable combination of circumstances be anticipated: I feel that it draws me on; and, if Alexander persists in refusing my propositions, I will pass the Niemen."¹ Marvellous as is the contrast between these anticipations and the actual issue of the campaign, the penetration of few men in Europe could at that time presage a different result from that which the French Emperor assumed as assured; and Madame de Stael expressed the almost universal opinion, that "when Napoleon was at Dresden in 1812, surrounded by all the sovereigns of Germany, and commanding an army of five hundred thousand men, it appeared impossible, according to all human calculation, that his expedition should not succeed."²

¹ Fain, i. 68, 69.

² De Stael, *Rév. Franç.* ii. 401.

He soon experienced, however, the truth of Montesquieu's observation, that great expeditions generally fail

from the very magnitude of the means provided to insure their success. No sooner had he arrived in Poland, than the Emperor was assailed by the cries of the peasantry who were ruined by his soldiers. Notwithstanding the utmost exertions on his part to prevent pillage, and to provide for their necessities, the enormous multitude of men and horses who were assembled, speedily exhausted the country. It was in vain that his prudent foresight had provided numerous battalions of light and heavy chariots for the supply of the army; innumerable carriages laden with tools of every description, twenty-six squadrons of waggons stored with military equipages, several thousand light caissons, carrying luxuries as well as objects of necessity of every description, and six complete sets of pontoons. The wants of such a prodigious accumulation of troops speedily exhausted all the means of subsistence which the country afforded, and all the stores they could convey with them. Forced requisitions of horses, chariots, and oxen from the peasantry soon became necessary; and the Poles, who expected deliverance from their bondage, were stripped of everything they possessed by their liberators. To such a pitch did the misery subsequently arrive, that the richest families in Warsaw were literally in danger of starving, and the interest of money rose to eighty per cent. Yet such was the rapidity of the marches at the opening of the campaign, that the greater part of the supplies thus exacted were abandoned or destroyed before the army had advanced many leagues into the Russian territory.¹

It was not, however, from any want of foresight and preparation, so far as human effort could go, that the troops were so soon driven to the necessity of subsisting by pillage. Never had such exertions been made to secure supplies for an army. Enormous magazines had been formed to provide for the wants of the troops in the campaign. By the treaty already mentioned, concluded with Prussia a short time before, that unhappy country

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69.

Distress in
Poland on
the first
entrance of
the French
army.

June 17.

¹ Chamb. i.
164, 170.
Segur, i.
114, 115.
Fain, i. 82,
83. De
Pradt, 85,
91, 93.
Gourgaud,
i. 103.

70.

Prodigious
efforts of the
Emperor for
the supply of
his troops.
Feb. 24,
1812.

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was compelled to furnish two hundred and twenty thousand quarters of oats, twenty-four thousand of rice, two million bottles of beer, four hundred thousand quarters of wheat, six hundred thousand of straw, three hundred and fifty thousand of hay, six million pecks of oats, forty-four thousand oxen, fifteen thousand horses, three thousand six hundred carriages, harnessed and furnished with drivers and horses; and hospitals provided with every requisite for twenty thousand patients. At Dantzic, the grand depot of the army, innumerable military stores were collected, and magazines capable of being transported by water through the Frische Haff to Königsberg, and by land across the country to Insterburg, where they were received on the Niemen. The active and impassioned mind of the Emperor had long been incessantly occupied with this object; the whole day was passed in dictating letters to his generals on the subject; in the night he frequently rose from bed to reiterate his commands. "For masses such as are now to be put in movement," said he, "the resources of no country can suffice. All the caissons must be ready to be laden with bread, flour, rice, vegetables, and brandy, besides what is requisite for the moveable columns. My manœuvres may assemble in a moment four hundred thousand men at one point: the country will be totally unable to provide for them; everything must be brought by themselves."¹

¹ Ségur, i. 120, 121, 124, and Gourgaud, i. 127. Fain, i. 92. Chamb. i. 164.

71.
And to elevate their spirit.

Before approaching the Niemen, the Emperor reviewed the principal corps of his army. On these occasions according to his usual practice, he passed through the ranks of the soldiers, and inquired minutely into their wants and equipments. The veterans he reminded of the battle of the Pyramids, of the glories of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena: the conscripts seemed equally the object of attention; was their pay regularly received, were their rations faithfully served out, had they any complaints to make against their officers? Frequently he halted in the centre of a regiment, and, calling the

troops around him, inquired what commissions were vacant, and who were most worthy to hold them. Having ascertained the age, services, and wounds of those specified, he immediately appointed them to the vacant situations in the presence of their comrades. Selecting one veteran from the ranks, he would remind him of the victory of the Pyramids: another he would himself decorate with the cross of the Legion of Honour, taken from his own breast, for his courage on the field of Austerlitz. To the standards of the distinguished regiments as they defiled past, riddled with shot and blackened with smoke, he bowed with respect. By attentions such as these, Napoleon gained the hearts of his soldiers, and produced that enthusiastic attachment to his person, which, as much as the splendour of his military talent, distinguished every period of his career.¹

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¹ Ségur, i.
123.

At length he approached the Niemen, and the numerous battalions of the grand army converged towards Kowno, which, being the extreme point of the salient angle where the Prussian projected into the Russian territory, seemed a favourable point for commencing operations. The infantry arrived in good order, and left but few stragglers behind; but the cavalry and artillery had already begun to suffer severely: the grass, the hay, the meadows, were soon entirely consumed by the enormous multitude of horses which passed along, and the succeeding columns underwent often all the horrors of famine from the devastation of those which had preceded them. Two hundred and twenty thousand men, and a hundred thousand horses, now concentrated at the point of junction of four different roads at Insterburg on the Pregel, presented a mass of combatants unparalleled in modern times for their efficiency and splendour. Before setting out for the Niemen, the troops were all served with provisions to convey them beyond that river to Wilna, the capital of Russian Poland. But all the care of the Emperor and his lieutenants was unable to provide

72.
Approach of
the French
army to the
Niemen.

June 17.

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June 23.

1 Ségur, i.
143. Fain,
i. 92, 93.
Jom. iv. 52.
Chamb. i.
170, 173.

subsistence for such stupendous masses; the carriages and cattle which had been seized in Old Prussia, under a provision that they should be sent back as soon as they reached the Niemen, were still kept for service beyond that river, and the unhappy owners resumed the road to their homes, destitute either of money or provisions, and uttering the loudest complaints against the injustice with which they had been treated. Pillage and disorder were already universal on the flanks of the army; and it was easy to foresee that want of provisions would prove the great difficulty of the campaign. These difficulties, however, had no sort of effect on the impassioned mind of the Emperor. The masses pressed on without intermission; column after column succeeded each other in ceaseless march; and at length on the 23d June, before daybreak, the imperial forces approached the river, which as yet was concealed by the great forest of Pilwiski, and Napoleon immediately mounted on horseback to reconnoitre the banks. His horse suddenly fell as he approached the shore, and he was precipitated on the sand.* Some one exclaimed, "It is a bad omen—a Roman would have retired:" but, without regarding the augury, he gave orders for the construction of three bridges, and retired to his quarters, humming the tune, "Malbrook s'en va à la guerre," and repeating with martial emphasis the line, "Ne sait quand il reviendra."¹

73.

Napoleon's
proclamation
to his
soldiers on
crossing the
river.
June 23.

On the approach of night, the following proclamation of the Emperor was read to the troops:—"Soldiers! the second war of Poland is commenced: the first was terminated at Friedland and Tilsit, when Russia swore an eternal alliance with France, and war with England.

* A similar incident occurred in ancient times, and on a hardly less momentous occasion. "C. Flaminius, quum apud lacum Thrasymentum cum Hannibale conficturus, convelli signa jussissit, lapso equo super caput ejus, humi prostratus est: Nihilque eo prodigio inhibitus, signiferis negantibus signa moveri; sua sede posse malum, ne ea continuo effodissent, minatus est. In ea acie, quindecim millia Romanorem cæsa, sex millia capta, decem millia fugata sunt." —LIVY.

Now she violates her oaths. She refuses to give any explanation of her strange conduct till the French eagles have repassed the Rhine, leaving our allies at her discretion. *Fate drags her on—let her destinies be fulfilled.* Does she imagine we are degenerated? Are we not still the soldiers of Austerlitz? We are placed between dishonour and war; our choice cannot be doubtful. Let us then advance, cross the Niemen, and carry the war into her own territory. The second Polish war will be as glorious as the first; but the peace we conclude shall be its own guarantee, and put an end to the fatal influence which for fifty years Russia has exercised in the affairs of Europe.” The soldiers, grouped in circles, heard these animating words with enthusiasm, and immediately the signal to advance was given. Vast columns defiled out of the forest and hollows with which the banks of the river abounded, and pressed in silence to the margin of the stream; not a sound was heard but the measured tread of marching bands, not a light was suffered to shine on the vast and disciplined array of France. The troops halted and lay down on the edge of the river, too impatient to sleep, and eagerly gazing through the gloom at the Russian shore.¹

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¹ Ségur, i.
144. Moni-
teur, July
1, 1812.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LXV.

NOTE A, p. 37.

GENERAL STATE OF THE FRENCH ARMIES IN SPAIN.

15th January 1811.

Present under arms.		Detached.		Absent.	Effective	Horses.	
Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.	Hospital.	Men.	Cavalry.	Draught.
295,227	52,462	17,780	4,714	48,831	361,838	41,189	15,987

15th April 1811.

276,575	46,990	15,121	2,166	40,079	331,776	37,855	11,801
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ARMY OF PORTUGAL.—*1st April 1811.*

Under arms.		Detached.		Hospital.	Effective.	
Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Men.	Horses.
51,237	11,717	3,716	—	12,229	68,051	11,142

ARMY OF THE SOUTH—*Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, commanding.—15th May.*

75,133	13,124	3,915	1,336	11,420	90,468	Cavalry.	Draught.
						12,156	2,304

Fifth Corps.—15th January.

18,767	6,158	3,035	640	—	—	—	—
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First Corps, before Cadiz.—15th February 1811.

25,781	2,661	1,331	681	1,997	29,409	2,207	1,035
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Fourth Corps.—15th February 1811.

Present under arms.		Detached.		Hospital.	Effective	Horses.	
Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Men.	Cavalry.	Draught.
22,723	5,464	741	397	2,577	26,033	5,069	793

*ARMY OF THE NORTH—Bessières, Duke of Istria, commanding.**1st February 1811.*

53,515 | 8,874 | 1,992 | — | 6,866 | 67,767 | 7,979 | 1,073

15th April 1811.

53,148 | 6,930 | 2,221 | — | 5,350 | 60,719 | 6,065 | 879

—NAPIER, iii. 576-581.

CHAPTER LXVI.

NOTE A, p. 114.

Summary of the Force of the Anglo-Portuguese Army, exclusive of Drummers and Artillerymen.—October 1, 1811.

CAVALRY.

	Present.	Sick.	Command.	Prisoners.	Total
British,	3,571	1,114	947	298	5,930
Portuguese,	1,373	256	1,140	—	2,769
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Cavalry,	4,944	1,370	2,087	298	8,699

INFANTRY.

	Present.	Sick.	Command.	Prisoners.	Total.
British,	29,530	17,974	2,663	1,084	51,851
Portuguese,	23,689	6,009	1,707	75	31,480
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Infantry,	53,219	23,983	4,370	1,759	83,331
General total, including sergeants, 58,263 sabres and bayonets in the field.					

NOTE B, p. 116.

Summary of the French Force in Spain at different periods, extracted from the Imperial Muster-Rolls.

	Under arms.		Detached.		Absent.	Effective.	
	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.	Hospital.	Men.	Horses.
Aug. 1811.	279,637	41,598	50,533	10,369	42,433	372,841	52,467
Jan. 1812.	258,156	41,049	22,805	5,434	42,056	324,933	42,348
Apr. 1812.	244,692	36,747	12,260	3,849	34,369	291,379	40,653

August 1, 1811.

	UNDER ARMS.		DETACHED.		Hospital.	EFFECTIVE.	
	Men.	Horse.	Men.	Horses.		Men.	Horses.
Armée du Midi,	50,597	10,008	32,043	5,359	11,836	94,508	1,195
— du Centre,	16,540	3,729	391	64	1,781	18,712	3,413
— de Portugal,	33,392	5,826	7,901	3,100	10,424	56,733	3,236
— d'Aragon,	45,102	5,718	1,397	388	5,458	51,957	557
— du Nord,	88,092	11,020	7,617	1,805	6,654	102,413	6,692
— de Catalogne,	23,553	1,368	1,153	153	5,305	30,095	2,234
Total,	262,276	37,669	50,502	10,869	41,452	354,418	3,667
Reinforcements,	17,361	3,929	81	—	981	18,423	2,439
General total,	279,637	41,598	50,583	10,869	42,433	372,841	3,531
							4,294
							1,268
							253
							35,348
							13,190
							3,929
							39,277
							13,190

—NAPIER, iv. 588, 589.

CHAPTER LXVII.

NOTE A, p. 223.

Comparative Height of the Alps, the Andes, and the Himalaya and Caucasus.

ALPS.		ANDES.		HIMALAYA AND ALTAI.	
	Feet.		Feet.		Feet.
Mont Blanc, . . .	15,781	Nevada di Sorata, . . .	25,250	Tchamoulari, . . .	26,894
Monte Rosa, . . .	15,585	Chimborazo, . . .	21,451	Dhavaladgiri, . . .	26,462
Matterhorn, . . .	14,771	Cayambe, . . .	19,633	Tewahir, . . .	25,749
Col du Géant, . . .	11,274	Rio di Illania, . . .	24,450	Himalaya, No. 14, . . .	23,463
Wetterhorn, . . .	12,518	Antisana, . . .	19,290	— . . .	12, 22,264
Finster-aar-horn, . . .	14,116	Cotopaxi, . . .	18,862	— . . .	3, 21,877
Jungfrau-horn, . . .	13,720	Popocatepetl, . . .	17,716	— . . .	23, 21,775
Shreckhorn, . . .	13,397	Mont St Elias, . . .	17,883	Bukh-da-Vula, . . .	18,400
Great Glochner, . . .	13,713	Orizaba, . . .	17,390	Pe-chan (volcano) . . .	13,600
Aiguille d'Argentière, . . .	13,390	Pichincha, . . .	15,670	Mont Bolor, . . .	18,000
Grenier, Tyrol, . . .	10,500	Lake of Titicaca, . . .	12,000	Bielukha, Altai, . . .	11,000
Gletcherburg, St Go-		City of Rio Bamba, . . .	10,800	Ala-tau, . . .	11,524
thard, . . .	10,830	— Quito, . . .	9,515	Italitzkoi, . . .	10,710
Summit of Mont Cenis, . . .	11,460	— Toluca, . . .	8,818		
Summit of Little St		— Bogota de San-			
Bernard, . . .	9,594	ta Fe, . . .	8,650		
Col de la Seigne, . . .	8,071	— Mexico, . . .	7,470		
Col da Bonhomme, . . .	8,025				
Passage of Great St					
Bernard, . . .	7,967				
Summit of do., . . .	11,006				

CAUCASUS AND TAURUS.

Ararat, . . .	15,000
Elbourz, Caucasus, . . .	15,027
Taurus, . . .	15,026
Anti-Taurus, . . .	15,616
Lebanon, . . .	10,939

NOTE B, p. 283.

Table showing the Commerce of the American States, before the Revolution, with Spain, and after it with Great Britain.

IMPORTS OF	1808.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Mexico,	5,250,000	622,800	307,020	303,562	978,441	728,858	199,221	421,487	459,610	402,820	254,822
Guatemala,	2,750,000	1,943	6,191	—	—	—	—	3,700	30,366	15,214	764
Columbia,	3,600,000	213,972	261,113	232,703	216,751	248,250	283,563	121,826	199,496	132,242	135,172
Buenos Ayres,	1,875,000	154,825	312,389	738,540	632,172	339,870	660,152	515,462	831,564	638,525	627,374
Chili,	1,875,000	409,124	700,371	318,950	540,626	651,627	718,199	816,817	840,221	696,176	861,963
Peru,	1,000,000	248,206	374,615	300,171	368,469	409,003	275,610	387,324	299,233	441,324	318,069
TOTAL, with Spanish Colo- nies since the Revolu- tion,	15,250,000	1,630,880	1,970,707	2,413,886	2,736,457	2,377,608	2,137,350	2,266,216	2,694,290	2,386,381	2,243,644
Brazil, (monarchical),		2,312,109	3,513,297	2,516,040	2,452,103	1,298,371	2,144,300	2,575,080	2,460,679	2,630,767	3,030,532

—HUMBOLDT'S *Nouvelle Espagne*, iv. 153, 154.—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, ii. 104.

This table exhibits only the imports of the South American Republics from Great Britain; but from the following table, it appears that the imports of Columbia from this country are about a third of its total imports, for they stood thus in 1829:—

	Imports.
France,	£35,530
Great Britain,	124,067
United States,	102,499
Germany,	117,174
Other States,	45,022
	£424,992

—MALTE-BRUN, xi. 45.

Assuming the total imports of the other South American Republics to bear the same proportion to those received from Great Britain that those of Columbia do, the imports from Great Britain must be somewhat more than tripled, to arrive at the total result. As the totals in the preceding table vary from £1,700,000 a-year to £2,500,000, this would serve to show that the total imports of the South American Republics, since their independence was established, varies from £5,000,000 to £7,500,000; or less than *half* what their importations were from Europe before the Revolution.

NOTE C, p. 283.

Table showing the Gold and Silver raised and coined in Mexico and South America in every year from 1800 to 1836—reduced to pounds sterling from the Spanish dollars and marcs.

Year.	MEXICO.			BOLIVIA.			CHILL.			PERU.			GRAND TOTAL.
	Gold.	Silver.	Total.	Gold.	Silver.	Total.	Gold.	Silver.	Total.	Gold.	Silver.	Total.	
1800	157,433	3,557,702	3,737,135	96,873	777,813	874,686	—	—	—	75,071	879,714	955,415	5,567,296
1801	129,073	2,922,609	3,051,682	101,298	818,136	919,434	—	—	—	65,562	904,646	970,208	5,201,360
1802	167,824	3,416,845	3,584,669	65,591	833,938	899,529	—	—	—	67,435	828,073	895,508	5,178,367
1803	129,214	2,922,609	3,051,682	60,228	470,348	530,576	—	—	—	70,076	797,984	868,060	5,032,227
1804	101,806	2,526,111	2,627,917	76,527	625,154	701,681	—	—	—	70,068	868,047	938,115	5,038,311
1805	97,008	2,526,111	2,627,917	166,573	647,994	814,567	—	—	—	79,388	876,623	956,011	7,104,426
1806	271,460	4,676,798	4,948,258	131,485	680,569	812,054	—	—	—	43,485	869,585	913,070	6,562,442
1807	302,453	4,109,487	4,411,940	132,707	734,014	866,721	—	—	—	77,131	754,783	831,914	5,356,432
1808	292,983	4,140,707	4,433,690	121,466	687,106	808,572	—	—	—	68,076	828,780	896,856	6,160,088
1809	292,983	4,140,707	4,433,690	121,466	687,106	808,572	—	—	—	73,379	867,486	940,865	6,307,972
1810	217,073	3,718,343	3,935,416	76,383	628,594	704,977	—	—	—	68,089	898,586	966,675	5,870,433
1811	217,073	3,718,343	3,935,416	146,168	738,101	884,269	—	—	—	67,876	901,765	969,641	5,718,384
1812	82,487	1,599,779	1,682,266	26,701	460,143	486,844	—	—	—	115,014	777,378	892,392	5,014,006
1813	123,614	2,102,516	2,226,130	—	—	—	—	—	—	134,177	725,743	859,920	3,784,360
1814	123,614	2,102,516	2,226,130	—	—	—	—	—	—	100,456	739,043	839,499	3,687,249
1815	97,293	1,682,565	1,779,858	—	—	—	—	—	—	165,433	773,283	938,716	3,104,565
1816	192,079	1,915,619	2,107,698	—	—	—	—	—	—	156,703	677,711	834,414	2,628,068
1817	170,888	1,816,108	1,986,996	—	—	—	—	—	—	94,367	772,276	866,643	3,481,475
1818	106,784	2,473,199	2,579,983	—	—	—	—	—	—	108,471	798,073	906,544	3,839,350
1819	107,785	2,552,448	2,660,233	—	—	—	—	—	—	186,644	798,073	984,717	3,839,350
1820	107,785	2,552,448	2,660,233	—	—	—	—	—	—	186,644	798,073	984,717	3,839,350
1821	60,701	1,562,811	1,623,512	91,671	398,119	489,790	—	—	—	31,410	428,440	459,850	3,567,487
1822	42,826	2,170,364	2,213,190	35,374	320,265	355,639	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,080,463
1823	68,463	1,823,064	1,891,527	22,369	316,611	338,980	—	—	—	6,187	163,410	169,597	2,997,426
1824	69,638	1,872,478	1,942,116	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	162,688	163,410	2,250,829
1825	105,042	1,733,685	1,838,727	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	467,366	483,031	2,327,861
1826	46,429	1,675,236	1,721,665	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	593,065	483,031	2,327,861
1827	119,469	2,014,374	2,133,843	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	512,959	611,941	2,353,006
1828	38,341	1,468,247	1,506,587	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	381,235	339,006	2,353,006
1829	137,294	2,230,793	2,368,087	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1830	53,414	2,205,753	2,259,167	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1831	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1832	—	—	—	26,126	381,598	407,724	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1833	—	—	—	31,557	372,382	403,939	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1834	42,377	2,359,417	2,401,794	78,615	34,880	113,500	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1835	70,210	2,389,417	2,459,627	121,213	300,887	422,099	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
1836	114,733	2,296,365	2,411,098	17,051	302,360	319,411	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
				39,131	206,092	245,223	—	—	—	—	401,708	432,712	2,680,279
							653			22,079	630,016	652,095	2,847,514

—Porter's Part. Table, v. 170.

NOTE D, p. 283.

TABLE I.—Showing the decline of the paper circulation of Great Britain since 1810, when the Spanish revolution broke out—

Year.	Bank of England Notes in circulation.	Country Banks.	Commercial Paper under Discount at Bank.	Year.
1800	£16,854,800	—	£6,421,900	1800
1801	16,205,280	—	7,905,100	1801
1802	15,186,880	—	7,523,300	1802
1803	15,849,980	—	10,747,600	1803
1804	17,077,850	—	9,982,400	1804
1805	17,871,170	—	11,265,500	1805
1806	17,730,120	—	12,380,100	1806
1807	16,950,680	—	13,484,600	1807
1808	14,182,860	—	12,950,100	1808
1809	18,542,860	—	15,475,700	1809
1810	21,019,600	—	20,070,600	1810
1811	23,369,220	—	14,355,400	1811
1812	23,408,279	—	14,291,600	1812
1813	22,219,930	—	12,330,200	1813
1814	24,801,080	£22,700,000	13,265,800	1814
1815	27,261,650	19,011,000	14,917,000	1815
1816	27,013,620	15,096,000	11,416,400	1816
1817	27,397,900	15,894,000	3,960,600	1817
1818	27,771,070	20,507,000	4,325,200	1818
1819*	25,227,100	15,701,328	6,515,000	*1819
1820	23,569,150	10,576,245	3,883,600	1820
1821	22,471,450	8,255,180	2,676,700	1821
1822	18,172,170	8,416,430	3,366,700	1822
1823	18,176,470	9,920,074	3,123,809	1823
1824	19,929,800	12,831,332	2,369,800	1824
1825	26,069,130	14,930,168	4,941,500	1825
1826	24,955,040	8,656,101	4,908,300	1826
1827	21,508,500	9,085,300	1,240,400	1827
1828	22,174,780	10,121,476	1,167,400	1828
1829	20,204,300	8,130,327	2,250,700	1829
1830	20,468,060	7,841,396	919,900	1830
1831	19,650,830	7,221,895	1,585,600	1831
1832	18,465,310	8,914,216		
1833	17,531,910	10,152,104		
1834	18,371,810	10,659,828		
1835	18,215,220	11,134,414		

No returns after this.

* Payment in gold or silver reverted to at the Bank, by Act 49 Geo. III. c. 471.

Whoever will reflect on this table, and recollect that at the time this vast diminution was going on, both in the gold and silver raised for the use of the whole globe by America, and in the paper circulation of the British islands, that the interest of the national debt and of all private debts was a fixed money payment, and that the population of the empire had advanced nearly forty per cent, and the exports, imports, and commercial tonnage more than doubled, will have no difficulty in seeing the real cause, both of the continued financial embarrassments, and the general distress of the industrious classes, and consequent wide spread of discontent, in this country since the peace.—See MARSHALL, 55; PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, ii. 7, iv. 7, v. 7.

TABLE II.—Showing the total produce of the Mexican mines, from 1809 to 1821.

1809 .	£6,161,240	1814 .	£1,982,639	1818 .	£2,849,096
1810 .	4,961,217	1815 .	1,760,655	1819 .	3,006,077
1811 .	2,510,450	1816 .	2,350,305	1820 .	2,601,588
1812 .	1,102,314	1817 .	2,212,448	1821 .	1,479,069
1813 .	1,533,490				

—HUMBOLDT, *Nouvelle Espagne*, iii. 307.

TABLE III.—Exhibiting at one view the Bullion annually raised and coined from the Spanish Mines, the Notes of the Bank of England, of Country Bankers, Commercial Paper under Discount at the Bank, Exports, Imports, Tonnage of Shipping, Population of Great Britain and Ireland, and Prices of Wheat, in every year from 1800 to 1886.

Year.	Prices of Wheat, Winchester Quarters.	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Tonnage of Shipping.	Imports.	Exports, Brit. and Irish Produce and Manufactures.	Commercial paper under Discount at Bank.	Country Bankers' Notes.	Bank of England Notes in circulation.	Raised and Coined in South American mines.	Year.
1800	s. d.	—	1,905,438	£ 28,257,781	£ 33,281,617	£ 6,421,900	—	£ 16,854,800	£ 5,567,236	1800
1801	138 1	15,542,646	1,702,749	31,786,283	24,927,654	7,906,100	—	16,205,280	5,201,260	1801
1802	76 3	—	1,813,256	33,826,210	23,632,524	7,423,300	—	15,186,880	5,178,967	1802
1803	56 8	—	1,753,806	36,622,686	20,467,309	10,747,600	—	15,849,980	5,032,227	1803
1804	51 8	—	1,737,641	27,819,562	23,376,941	9,982,400	—	17,077,850	5,038,211	1804
1805	80 4	—	1,645,133	28,561,270	23,376,941	11,265,500	—	17,871,170	7,104,426	1805
1806	75 8	—	1,615,133	26,899,658	20,861,879	12,380,100	—	17,730,120	6,562,442	1806
1807	76 0	15,942,460	—	26,734,425	23,301,214	13,484,600	—	16,980,680	5,336,452	1807
1808	69 2	—	—	26,735,540	24,011,245	12,950,100	—	14,162,860	6,169,038	1808
1809	90 6	—	2,072,244	31,730,597	33,542,274	13,475,700	—	18,532,800	6,997,853	1809
1810	101 1	—	*	39,301,612	34,061,901	20,070,600	—	21,019,000	9,870,972	1810
1811	95 6	17,506,803	*	22,681,400	22,681,400	14,355,400	—	23,369,220	4,718,584	1811
1812	105 9	—	—	26,163,431	20,508,508	14,221,600	—	23,408,279	3,649,352	1812
1813	119 0	—	—	*	*	12,330,200	—	22,219,930	3,784,200	1813
1814	78 2	—	1,880,535	33,755,264	34,207,253	13,285,800	22,700,000	24,801,080	3,687,249	1814
1815	62 1	—	2,119,093	32,987,396	42,875,906	14,917,000	19,011,000	27,261,650	3,104,565	1815
1816	52 0	—	1,795,188	27,431,604	35,717,070	11,416,400	15,096,000	27,013,620	2,598,008	1816
1817	104 1	—	2,070,132	30,834,209	40,111,427	3,960,600	15,894,000	27,397,900	3,481,475	1817
1818	84 10	—	2,648,851	36,885,182	49,700,521	4,325,200	20,507,000	27,771,070	3,898,350	1818
1819	76 3	—	2,251,812	30,776,810	33,534,176	6,515,000	15,701,228	25,227,100	3,557,236	1819
1820	64 0	—	2,115,671	92,438,680	38,366,625	3,883,000	10,570,245	23,569,150	3,808,035	1820
1821	54 0	21,391,462	1,695,230	30,792,760	40,831,744	2,676,700	8,256,180	22,471,460	2,877,467	1821
1822	43 8	—	2,131,337	30,500,094	44,536,533	3,366,700	8,416,430	18,172,170	3,080,403	1822
1823	40 4	—	2,323,855	35,798,707	43,804,372	3,123,800	9,920,074	18,176,470	2,638,267	1823
1824	59 8	—	2,656,761	37,502,035	48,375,551	2,360,800	12,831,332	19,929,800	2,367,426	1824
1825	68 5	—	3,102,746	44,137,482	47,166,020	4,941,500	14,930,168	26,069,130	2,267,821	1825
1826	60 3	—	2,644,746	37,686,113	40,965,735	4,906,300	8,656,101	24,955,040	2,320,891	1826
1827	53 6	—	2,839,762	44,887,774	52,219,280	1,240,400	9,985,360	21,568,550	2,894,067	1827
1828	50 0	—	2,798,977	45,028,805	52,707,455	1,167,400	10,121,476	22,174,780	2,993,006	1828
1829	72 0	—	2,804,828	43,981,317	56,213,941	2,250,700	8,130,327	20,204,300	3,254,879	1829
1830	54 4	23,562,791	2,938,870	46,245,241	61,140,861	919,000	7,841,396	20,408,060	2,580,293	1830
1831	67 10	—	3,241,927	49,713,889	60,683,933	1,585,000	7,921,845	19,680,820	827,343	1831
1832	57 7	—	2,915,959	41,586,781	65,026,702	—	8,914,216	18,465,310	986,728	1832
1833	51 1	—	2,945,899	45,952,551	69,989,339	—	10,152,104	17,581,810	3,589,736	1833
1834	47 5	—	3,132,168	49,362,811	73,831,550	—	10,659,828	18,571,810	3,554,501	1834
1835	39 6	—	3,809,724	48,911,542	78,376,731	—	11,134,414	18,215,220	2,847,514	1835
1836	36 1	25,890,600	3,494,372	57,023,867	82,295,837	—	—	—	—	1836

—FOURTH'S *Progress of the Nation*, iii. 75-79; *Tooke on Prices*, iii. 330.

* Records destroyed by fire.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

NOTE A, p. 329.

General State of the French Army.—May 15, 1812.

	Present under arms.		Detached.		Hospital.	Total.		
	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Horses.	Men.	Men.	Cavalry.	Artillery.
Armée du Midi,	56,031	12,101	2,787	660	4,652	63,470	7,311	4,340
— du Centre,	17,395	4,208	158	37	766	19,203	3,332	420
— de Portugal,	52,618	7,244	9,750	1,538	8,322	70,700	4,481	3,448
— d'Aragon,	27,218	4,768	4,458	605	8,701	35,377	2,976	1,980
— de Catalogue,	33,677	1,577	1,844	267	6,009	41,530	1,376	279
— du Nord,	33,771	6,631	2,560	271	7,767	49,098	4,443	1,163
Total,	225,710	35,929	21,557	3,378	31,227	279,378	23,919	11,630
Old reserve at Bayonne,	3,894	221	1,642	—	964	6,500	207	—
New reserve at Bayonne,	2,598	116	3,176	—	5	5,769	103	—
General total,	232,502	36,266	26,375	3,378	32,196	291,647	24,229	11,630

CHAPTER LXXI.

NOTE A, p. 610.

Force of the French Army which entered Russia in 1812.

INFANTRY.

Generals.	General Staff.	Date of entering Russian territory.	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Horses.
Berthier, . . .	1st Corps	June 24, 1812	3,075	908	1,748
Davoust, . . .	2d do.	Idem	68,627	3,424	11,417
Oudinot, . . .	2d do.	Idem	34,299	2,840	7,331
Ney, . . .	3d do.	Idem	35,755	3,587	8,039
Eugene, . . .	4th do.	June 30, 1812	42,430	2,368	10,057
Foniatowski,	5th do.	June 24, 1812	32,150	4,152	9,438
Gouvion St-Cyr,	6th do.	July 1, 1812	23,228	1,906	3,660
Reynier, . . .	7th do.	June 24, 1812	15,003	2,186	5,582
Vandamme, . . .	8th do.	Idem	15,885	2,050	3,477
Victor, . . .	9th do.	Sept. 3, 1812	31,633	1,904	4,081
Macdonald, . . .	10th do.	June 24, 1812	30,923	2,474	6,285
Schwartzenberg,	Austrian do.	Idem	26,830	7,318	13,126
Napoleon, . . .	Imperial Guard.	Idem	41,094	6,279	16,322

CAVALRY.

Generals.	General Staff.	Date of entering Russian territory.	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Horses.
Nansouty, . . .	1st Corps	June 24, 1812	—	12,077	13,014
Montbrun, . . .	2d do.	Idem	—	10,436	11,125
Grouchy, . . .	3d do.	Idem	—	9,676	10,451
Latour-Maubourg,	4th do.	Idem	—	7,994	8,766
Durutte, . . .	Division Durutte	Nov. 2, 1812	13,592	—	76
Loison, . . .	Division Loison	Nov. 18, 1812	13,290	—	412
	{ Troops sent during the campaign }	different dates	65,000	15,000	20,000
			491,953	96,579	164,446

RECAPITULATION OF THE WHOLE ARMY.

	Men.	Horses.
Infantry,	491,953	164,446
Cavalry,	96,579	
Add—Portions of the artillery, engineers, and military equipments,	21,526	18,265
Total who entered the Russian territory,	610,058	182,711
Add—Number of men and horses absent, but who rejoined the army during the campaign,	37,100	4,400
Total effective force who entered the Russian territory,	647,158	187,111
Total guns,	1,372	

—*Imperial Muster-Rolls*, given in CHAMBRAY, vol. i. App. No. 2.

NOTE B, p. 611.

Force of the Russian Army opposed to Napoleon at the commencement of hostilities.

BARCLAY DE TOLLY, Commander of the First Army of the West.

Generals.	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Cossacks.
Wittgenstein,	20,664	2416	2940	1500
Bagawouth,	17,712	1208	1715	—
Touczkoff,	19,188	946	1715	500
Schouvaloff,	16,236	1208	1470	—
Grand-duke Constantine,	19,682	3084	1715	—
Doctoroff,	17,712	1208	1715	—
Ouvaroff,	—	3720	245	—
Korff,	—	3624	980	—
Pahlen,	—	3020	245	—
Platoff,	—	—	245	7000
Total,	111,194	20,434	12,985	9000

PRINCE BAGRATHION, Commander of the Second Army of the West.

Racffskoi,	17,712	1208	1715	—
Borosdin,	16,236	3020	1225	—
Siewers,	—	3624	980	—
Neweroffskoi,	8,856	—	—	—
Ilowaiskoi,	—	—	245	4500
Total,	42,804	7852	4165	4500

TORMASOFF, Commander of the Third Army of the West.

Kamenskoi,	13,284	1208	980	—
Markoff,	17,712	1208	980	—
Sacken,	4,000	2000	490	—
Lambert,	—	5436	735	—
Total,	34,996	9852	3185	450

RECAPITULATION OF THE WHOLE ARMY.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Cossacks.
First Army of the West, .	111,194	20,434	12,985	9000
Second do. .	42,804	7,852	4,165	4500
Third do. .	34,996	9,852	3,185	4500
Grand total, .	188,994	38,138	20,335	18,000

SUMMARY.

Infantry, .	188,992
Cavalry, .	38,138
Artillery, .	20,335
Cossacks, .	18,000
Total, .	265,467

END OF VOL. X.

